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THE

# BAPTISM OF CHRIST,

A

# GOSPEL ORDINANCE:

BEING ALTOGETHER

## INWARD AND SPIRITUAL:

Not, like John's, into Water; but, according to the real nature of the Gospel, into the very name, life, and power of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST.

Shewing that the Apostles' use of Water Baptism was by no means as an Ordinance of CHRIST, but as the Baptism of John; and that all who are baptized into CHRIST, have put on CHRIST, not only professionally, but substantially—that is, have put him on as the whole Armour of Light, and walk in him in newness of Life.

By *JOB SCOTT.*

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# PREFACE.

THIS little treatiſe, reader, is written chiefly for the help and information of ſuch as are in a ſtate of honeſt enquiry, and who have not yet ſeen clearly beyond ſome of thoſe former obſervances, which at the very beſt were but preparatory, and pointing to him, and his work on the ſoul, in whom they all end, and are done away forever; but partly for the confirmation and eſtabliſhment of ſuch as have been already convinced of the unſhadowy diſpenſation of the goſpel.

I HAVE long ſeen with ſorrow, that many ſincere ſouls are much detained from the ſubſtance, by undue attachments to the ſign. I have once known and groaned under this bondage and entanglement myſelf; for though I was never a partaker in any of thoſe outward ordinances, yet I was divers years blinded in my underſtanding, through the vail that was over me, in reading the accounts of baptiſm in the New Teſtament. I could not underſtand why the Apoſtles uſed water, eſpecially after Chriſt's reſurrection, if it was not Chriſt's baptiſm; nor how men could poſſibly baptize with the Holy Ghoſt; and therefore finding men commanded to baptize, and that they did baptize with water, I concluded, very ignorantly, that water was commanded by Chriſt. —This concluſion, I have ſince ſeen, was the natural reſult of inexperience, in an anxious in-

veſtigation of things not known by mere human wiſdom, or creaturely abilities, but only ſpiritually diſcerned; and as my mind was ſincerely engaged to ſee for myſelf, and avoid all deception, it pleaſed him who has the key of David, (after I had paſſed ſeveral years of doubt and heſitation, ſometimes concluding I ſhould before long be baptized in water, and then ſtruck with an inward and feeling conviction of its utter inſufficiency towards effecting the renovation and cleanſing which my ſoul at times longed for) to open my underſtanding, chiefly by his own internal operations and illuminations in my enquiring mind, without much of any inſtrumental means, either reading or hearing; ſo that I ſaw clearly, (which I had too long been very dull in believing, and fearful in receiving) that Chriſt himſelf in ſpirit had long time been ſtriving with me, moving in me, wooing, calling, knocking, checking, reſtraining, conſtraining, and powerfully impreſſing my mind; but I knew him not, and in that inward and immediate way ſought not after him. When, alas! had I but known the gift of God, and who it was that inwardly talked with me, I might have aſked of him, and received the living water of his heavenly kingdom; as afterwards I did, to the full ſatisfaction of my thirſty ſoul. And when this became my joyful experience, wherein the beloved of my ſoul met with me, as with many others, in the garden, ſaying "eat, O friends—drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved," Cant. v. 1, I became perfectly ſatisfied, that outward bread, wine and water, were no part of the baptiſm or ſupper of the Lord, nor any way neceſſary to his anointed, in things pertaining to ſalvation. It was not very long after this, before

before I not only believed, but knew, by moſt conſolatory experience, that men, even in our day, though helpleſs of themſelves, are through divine aſſiſtance enabled iuſtrumentally, in a very powerful and heart-watering manner, to baptize with the Holy Ghoſt. For being now engaged to feel after God, if happily I might from time to time renewedly find him, he was not only pleaſed in theſe my ſilent approaches, in religious meetings, and more retired waitings, to ariſe in me immediately, with the brightneſs of a morning without clouds, and powerfully to manifeſt himſelf to me and in me, as a fountain of living waters; but was alſo graciouſly pleaſed to ſend among us, of his ſervants, ſuch as were well qualified to do the work of evangeliſts, and who being largely acquainted with the ſoul-ſaving baptiſm of Chriſt in themſelves, were ſo filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and ſpake ſo demonſtratively, in the life, evidence, and divine virtue and vigour of it, that it was like the oil poured on Aaron's head, which ran down to the very ſkirts of his garment—it even reached, overflowed, and filled my poor ſoul.

Much I could write reſpecting theſe bleſſed days of my eſpouſals, but enlargement here may be improper; I ſhall therefore juſt ſay, that had I not felt living deſires that others may come to a full participation of the ſame bleſſed experience, and that none may be longer unprofitably amuſed and detained, by lifeleſs ſigns and ſymbols, from the all-ſufficient ſubſtance, thou, reader, had never heard from me in this way.—I know many find their intereſt in keeping up a ſhow in theſe things, and repreſenting them of exceeding great importance.—I have no doubt many very ſincerely

urge them upon their friends and acquaintance, as believing them injunctions of the goſpel; but I am alſo ſadly ſenſible that too many "ſeek their gain from their quarter," and obtain it, by keeping up a lifeleſs round of prayers, preaching, ſinging, eating, drinking, dipping, ſprinkling, &c. and am convinced beyond ſcruple, that the mammon of unrighteouſneſs, this way increaſed, is a powerful obſtruction to the coming of the kingdom of our Lord, in life and power, unclouded and uneclipſed by the retention of vailing and darkening obſervances.—Babylon is not yet ſo fallen, as to riſe no more: ſhe is ſtill lurking in a myſtery.—She is ſtill myſtery Babylon the great, and ſtill the mother of many harlots—thouſands are enſnared among ſome or other of her daughters, and are not aware of her cup.—May the Lord graciouſly preſerve the honeſt-hearted, of every denomination, from the harmful influences of all her many and artful ſorceries, and keep alive their hunger and thirſt after true righteouſneſs.—I have no doubt but that, if I am finally ſo happy as to reign in life by Jeſus Chriſt, my only hope and Saviour, I ſhall be there accompanied by thouſands, who have through their whole lives lived under the vail, as to outward ordinances; but who, having in great ſincerity done what they believed was their duty, in ſingleneſs as unto God, and not unto men, are and finally will be well accepted of him, who ſeeth not as man ſeeth, but looks through all outſide things to the heart. And yet, on the contrary, I do firmly believe many, who have began and ran well for a ſeaſon, have been by degrees, as outward things have become more and more conſiderable with them, drawn more and more from the true hunger, and

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been more and more eaſy and ſatisfied with little or nothing of the true bread, water and wine, of the kingdom, till at length they have centered in formality, and ſat down in a reſt ſhort of the ſoul's ſalvation.—That thou mayeſt ſhun this dangerous rock, dear reader, and be preſerved living and growing in the holy root of divine life, to the end of thy ſtay here, and finally admitted to the joys of the bleſſed, forever to adore and bleſs the God of all grace and true conſolation, is the prayer of thy ſincere friend, and willing ſervant in the labour and travail of the goſpel,

THE AUTHOR.

# The Baptiſm of CHRIST, a Goſpel Ordinance, &c.

## CHAP. I.

*Of the regular order and ſucceſſion of divine diſpenſations. Signs and figures pointed at life and ſubſtance. Hence Chriſt deferred his goſpel miniſtry, till John's courſe in a baptiſm, but figurative of his own, was fulfilled. John's baptiſm and Chriſt's are type and antitype. Chriſt ſent his diſciples to baptize with his own* baptiſm. *So breathes on them the Holy Ghoſt. Great wiſdom even in the* timing *our Lord's baptiſm by John, alſo in his anſwer to John. John preached the kingdom but at hand. In its nature and fulneſs, it is* after, *not* before, *nor joined with the type. John prepared the way. Some took the kingdom by force. All types end in the antitype. Chriſt's baptiſm cleanſes thoroughly, as John's was total immerſion. A picture, as truly a man, as water baptiſm Chriſt's. A ſingle eye full of light, and then the ſhadow is behind us. Chriſt was baptized in water, not to continue, but fulfil that* decreaſing *ſign; and ſo to make way for the* increaſing *ſubſtance. He alſo* ate, *and thus fulfilled the paſſover.*

IT is very obſervable, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt deferred the open and expreſs promulgation of the goſpel of the kingdom till John the Baptiſt, his immediate forerunner, had fulfilled his courſe; and that not before, but after John had finiſhed his prepatarory miniſtration, ceaſed the

the voice crying in the wilderneſs, prepare, &c. quite ended his own decreaſing work in that outward elementary baptiſm, which as a ſign was to precede and prepare the way for Chriſt's, and was ſhut up in priſon; he, the Lord of life and glory, the end and ender of all typical diſpenſations, immediately entered upon the publication of the goſpel word; the new, the increaſing and ever continuing diſpenſation of life, ſubſtance and ſalvation.—For we read, Mat. iv. 12, "now when Jeſus had heard that John was caſt into priſon, he departed into Galilee." And verſe 17, "from that time Jeſus began to preach, and to ſay, repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." This kingdom, now ſo near at hand, and which John had juſt before proclaimed to be ſo, was and is inward and ſpiritual; for our Lord himſelf declares, "the kingdom of God is within you," Luke xvii. 21. And it is clear that he waited for John's courſe to be firſt fulfilled, before he ever began publicly to preach it. See alſo Mark i. 14. 15. "Now after that John was put in priſon, Jeſus came into Galilee, preaching the goſpel of the kingdom of God; and ſaying, the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the goſpel." The goſpel is not ſign or figure, but life and ſubſtance, the "power of God to ſalvation," free from all types and ſhadows, being the laſt and laſting diſpenſation; and which was not to commence in its general fulneſs, till after all others. Chriſt is often ſpoken of as coming after John; and John, as going, or coming, or being ſent before Chriſt: and therefore as John's courſe in the very laſt of the ſhadows, water baptiſm, was now completed, the great miniſter of the ſanctuary very pertinently,

pertinently, at the very beginning of his own goſpel preaching, proclaimed, the time is fulfilled. I know not what words he could have uſed more proper and ſignificant to introduce the glorious goſpel, and teach mankind that all ſigns were to end in the ſubſtance. And from a ſincere wiſh for the real good and ſolid information of mankind, I deſire this one word, fulfilled, in this and divers other places, may be ſpecially noticed, and deeply conſidered. It is of vaſt importance.

And why did Jeſus wait till John's courſe was fulfilled? why, then, immediately on hearing of his impriſonment, did he begin to preach the goſpel of the kingdom as then juſt at hand? and why was he ſo careful, at his very entrance on this great work, to make this ſpecial declaration, "the time is fulfilled? There is deep inſtruction in it all. He knew the times and ſeaſons, though many who could diſcern the face of the ſky, and had underſtanding in the forebodings of change in regard to the weather, were and are ignorant of the ſigns of the times; and through this ignorance many did, and many ſtill do, retain the ſhadow out of all proper ſeaſon. But Chriſt, as he knew, ſo he carefully obſerved the right time. He would have all things pertaining to his kingdom, eſpecially his own immediate tranſactions, take place in their proper ſeaſons. He would not haſten his firſt great miracle in Cana, of turning water into wine, even though his own mother ſolicitouſly prompted him to that glorious exertion of his divinity.—He would not go up to the feaſt, till the right time. So neither would he begin his own public miniſtration (which was for the ending of all ſhadows, the abolition

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and blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances) till John's (which was much in the ſhadow) was fulfilled. "The law and the prophets propheſied until John." John was himſelf both a prophet and under the law, yet he and his miniſtration were until Chriſt. His coming after the reſt of the prophets, being ſent immediately before the face of the Lord, and to prepare his way, in no wiſe hindered his being a prophet himſelf. Chriſt teſtifies, among them that are born of women, there hath not riſen a greater, Mat. xi. 11. He alſo ſays, Mat. v. 17, 18, "think not that I am come to deſtroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to deſtroy, but to fulfil; for verily I ſay unto you, till heaven and earth paſs, one jot or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled." Here we ſee he came to fulfil both the law, and the predictions of the prophets. Accordingly we read of divers things ſaid to be done, that it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken by the prophets, or ſpoken aforetime. Hence, though John came after the others, and as it were reached from them to Chriſt, yet he too came under the law, and was one among the prophets, which Chriſt came not to deſtroy, but whoſe predictions and forerunning diſpenſations he came to fulfil. John's prophetic declaration was eminently pertinent, in regard to the great work of Chriſt in goſpel baptiſm, the ſanctification of ſouls; and ſo was his figurative immerſion: and Chriſt, in his ſaving baptiſm, amply fulfils both the prophecy and the ſign. Chriſt was "made under the law" himſelf, Gal. iv. 4; then ſurely ſo was John. And ſeeing John's watery miniſtration was to prepare Chriſt's way, and lead to his ſaving baptiſm; Chriſt having thus carefully deferred his

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own public miniſtration till John's was fulfilled, as ſoon as this was done, and John caſt into priſon, the right time being now exactly arrived, he went forthwith, on hearing of John's impriſonment, into Galilee; and there and "from that time began to preach," and proclaim the word and goſpel of that unſhadowy diſpenſation and kingdom, which ends and fulfils all mere ſigns and figures and is to increaſe and remain of perpetual continuance. Hence Peter declares the word "was publiſhed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptiſm which John preached," Acts x. 37; and may we not ſafely conclude, from Peter's ſo particularly mentioning this, as being after John's baptiſm, and from the evangeliſt's mentioning it as after his impriſonment, that they had heard our Lord expreſs his acting on ſpecial principle in thus deferring his own public miniſtry, till his forerunner's, in that forerunning baptiſm, was fulfilled; and eſpecially as his going into Galilee, to begin his ſaid public miniſtry, is expreſsly ſaid to be, "that it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken by Eſaias the prophet?" Mat. iv. 14.

Thus it ſeems he acted with ſpecial deſign, both as to the place where and the time when he began the open publication of the glorious goſpel. It was therefore with divine pertinency, that as he began this gracious publication, he firſt of all announced "the time is fulfilled." His hour was now come. For well knowing when it was and when it "was not yet come," he had now waited till John had firſt preached, according to Paul's teſtimony, "the baptiſm of repentance to all the people of Iſrael;" and ſo had "fulfilled his courſe."

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See Acts xiii. 24, 25. All this tends forcibly and beautifully to open both the neceſſity of his being baptized of John juſt then when he was, and the meaning of his anſwer, when John forbade him. John knew his own baptiſm was not ſaving, was not Chriſt's; but was to decreaſe and end in Chriſt's, being only deſigned for our Lord's manifeſtation to Iſrael, and to prepare the people for his ſaving baptiſm.—And knowing this, John plainly and honeſtly teſtifies, that he ſhould be made manifeſt to Iſrael, "therefore am I come baptizing with water," John i. 31. This plain and full teſtimony, from the mouth of John himſelf, at once evinces that his baptiſm, being but with water, was far different from Chriſt's, and inferior to it; and that it was to introduce, or as a ſign to aſſiſt in turning the minds of the people to look for, receive and ſubmit to the burning, purifying baptiſm of the goſpel.—In ſhort, water baptiſm and Chriſt's are plainly type and antitype: and accordingly Peter, ſpeaking of the baptiſm which now ſaves, uſes the Greek word antitypon, 1 Pet. iii. 21.

Peter doubtleſs knew the type or figure could not ſave. It is "the ingrafted word which is able to ſave" the ſoul, James i, 21. Chriſt ſanctifies and cleanſes the church "with the waſhing of water by the word." Eph. v. 26. This "ingrafted word," this ſanctifying "waſhing of water by the word," is all inward and ſpiritual. It is the antitype of the divers waſhings under Moſes, and equally ſo of water baptiſm, in every form. This cleanſes the ſoul, as outward water does the body, and puts away the filth of the ſpirit, as that does the filth of the fleſh. Hence, and hence only,

only, it is saving: herein is the alone propriety of Peter's words, "baptism doth also now save us." As Christ came to fulfil the law of commandments, contained in outward ordinances, and to end every dispensation of signs and shadows, he had many things to submit to, on purpose to fulfil the typical righteousness of those dispensations. Hence he was circumcised, kept the law, celebrated the passover, &c. On the same ground, it behoved him to be baptized in water, the last lively typical representation of his own great work of sanctification, that is, the last in the course of time preceding his beginning the publication of the gospel word from Galilee. But when he came to John to be baptized of him, John not knowing his design in it, nor why it must be so, forbade him, saying, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" Mat. iii. 14. It is not at all strange that John forbade him; for he knew his own baptism, being outward, typical, and preparatory, was to decrease and give place to Christ's. It was "unto repentance;" by a total outside immersion, it pointed out the necessity of the removal of all sin, and bringing "forth fruits meet for repentance." It was used for his manifestation to Israel, whose fiery baptism alone could effect this inward cleansing from all sin. Christ was neither ignorant of himself, nor guilty of sin. Hence he could not receive John's figurative immersion upon the same grounds as others did, neither in order to repentance and remission of sin, nor in order to be made manifest to himself. John doubtless marvelled, therefore, to see him come to his baptism. For though it seems he did not, before this, so fully know him to be the Christ as he did afterwards, yet on his now coming

coming to him, it ſeems he had ſome ſenſe and knowledge of it, and marvelled at his coming. But our Lord graciouſly condeſcended to ſhow on what grounds it was now neceſſary: that it was neither in order to repentance in him, nor to a manifeſtation of him to himſelf, nor yet to perpetuate a ſymbolical inſtitution under the goſpel; but, on the contrary, to fulfil it. Chriſt knew the ſign muſt precede the ſubſtance. He knew the many ſymbols of the law were but "a ſhadow of things to come," Col. ii. 17; that the law, with all its figurative offerings, cleanſings, and divers waſhings, was a ſchool-maſter for a ſeaſon, to lead to himſelf, the ſubſtance; ſee Gal. iii. 24. He knew "the baptiſm which John preached" was the peculiar ſign or repreſentation of his own, and was uſed to prepare the people's minds for it, and thereby prepare in their hearts the way of the Lord, and lead forward to his ſaving manifeſtation to Iſrael. Therefore had he began the publication of the goſpel of that ſpiritual kingdom, which is without ſigns and ſhadows, and cometh not with outward obſervation, before John, the adminiſtrator of a baptiſm figurative thereof, had firſt fulfilled his courſe in that figurative adminiſtration, it would by no means ſo fully, ſtrikingly and inſtructively have anſwered and illuſtrated the deſigns of eternal wiſdom, as his deferring it till afterwards; for, how then could John's work have been ſtrictly according to God's deſign in ſending him? that is, to prepare the way of the Lord—to go before him—and make ready a people prepared for him; ſee Luke i. 17.

Hence it was neceſſary, that in the courſe of God's divine Providence, and divers diſpenſations,

tions, he who has to go before our Lord in the power and ſpirit of Elias, thus to prepare his way, ſhould be ſent ſeaſonably to begin and "fulfil his courſe," in that miniſtration and baptiſm which was in order to the manifeſtation of the great goſpel baptizer, before the publication of that word which began from Galilee, after his baptiſm. Hence alſo it was neceſſary that Jeſus ſhould be baptized in the figure, and thus accompliſh what he had to do outwardly in the fulfilment of water baptiſm, previouſly to that wonderful deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt upon him. For as he was to be "anointed to preach the goſpel" (ſee Luke iv. 18.) and as this anointing was by the Spirit of the Lord that was upon him, and not by his baptiſm in water, therefore, as the time drew near that he muſt enter, thus anointed, upon his public miniſtry, it behoved him firſt to ſubmit to John's baptiſm, that all things might be done in proper ſeaſon, and follow in regular ſucceſſion, one after another.

The Almighty had given John beforehand to underſtand, that he on whom he ſhould ſee the Holy Ghoſt not only deſcending, but alſo remaining on him, "the ſame is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghoſt," John i. 33. Thus was the deſcent and abiding of the Holy Ghoſt, even on our Lord himſelf, pointed out as that which alone could qualify to baptize others with it; and it will hold good of all his diſciples and miniſters to the world's end. Therefore they have his promiſe to be with them by his Spirit, the Holy Ghoſt, in the execution of his great commiſſion, to baptize into the divine name and power of Father, Son, &c. And as all ſent by him to baptize with the

Holy Ghoſt muſt be firſt ſo baptized themſelves, he ſat the glorious example. And when he came afterwards to ſend them forth in the great work of baptizing, he declared with divine propriety, "as my Father hath ſent me, even ſo ſend I you." And ſhewing plainly how that was, he "breathed on them, and ſaith unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghoſt," John xx. 21, 22. See how exactly he ſent them to baptize, &c. as his Father ſent him. His Father, ſending him to baptize with the Holy Ghoſt, breathed it, or cauſed it to deſcend and abide upon him. This proved and proclaimed him to be the baptizer with it; he ſending his ſervants to baptize with the ſame baptiſm, breathed on them, that they might receive a meaſure of the qualification as he received of his Father. And this was truly neceſſary —the ſame work requires the ſame qualifications —"he that believeth on me," (ſays Chriſt) "the works that I do, ſhall he do alſo," John xiv. 12.

He was not baptized with water, to qualify him ſo to baptize others; for he baptized none in water; the work which he did in baptiſm, was inward, and with the Holy Ghoſt—the ſpiritual purifying fire of the Lord. He did not breathe on his diſciples, and baptize them with the Holy Ghoſt, to qualify them to baptize others in water; that had not been ſending them, as his Father ſent him: it had not been ſending them, nor enabling them to do the ſame work, and baptize with the ſame baptiſm, as he did. Had he, after breathing on them, ſent them, qualified with the Holy Ghoſt, to baptize with a mere element, it had been very different from his Father's ſending him in

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the power and baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt, to baptize others with the ſame. And as their qualification to adminiſter his ſpiritual baptiſm was that of the Holy Ghoſt coming upon them; ſo, in his own caſe, the deſcent and abiding thereof upon him was the very thing made uſe of by the wiſdom of God, whereby to manifeſt him more clearly unto John, as the goſpel baptizer. Seeing, therefore, this his qualification for baptizing with his own great goſpel baptiſm, which is after and ſuperior to all ſigns, muſt be received from on high, before he began that glorious goſpel miniſtry, which is alſo without ſigns, it was, as before noted, neceſſary for him previouſly to ſubmit to that baptiſm, which being but a ſign, was to decreaſe and end in the ſubſtance, which the ſign pointed to.—Hence the neceſſity of his waiting till John had firſt baptized many of the people, borne teſtimony to one coming after him, and turned their minds to the neceſſity of his more ſpiritual and refining baptiſm.—And hence alſo the neceſſity of his receiving that baptiſm which was only in the ſign, and to vaniſh as the ſubſtance was experienced; not after, but before he received that deſcent and abiding of the Holy Ghoſt upon him, which pointed him out as the great adminiſtrator of that baptiſm which, in the very order of things, is after that which is but a ſhadow of the good things to come. Thus the type was kept in its time and place; before, not after, the antitype. But had not Chriſt's baptiſm in the type, to fulfil it, as a thing ending in the antitype, been prepoſterous, had it been after his glorious antitypical baptiſm and anointing, by the deſcent and abiding of the Holy Ghoſt upon him?—This being the caſe, there is evidently a very beautiful diſplay of

wiſdom and propriety in our Lord's anſwer to John, when John forbade him. Indeed every part of it to me, ſeems full of divine inſtruction. It ſatisfied John, and removed all his ſcruples; for though he did not at firſt know that Jeſus muſt be baptized as well as circumciſed, in the figure, and ſubmit to the other figurative inſtitutions of the law, in order to fulfil all the figurative or typical righteouſneſs of the ſeveral diſpenſations preceeding the goſpel; yet he ſeems well to have known that his baptiſm muſt vaniſh and decreaſe, as being in its nature outward, and in its deſign but preparatory to Chriſt's. Hence, ſays he, "he muſt increaſe, but I muſt decreaſe," John iii. 30. "I indeed baptize you with water, but he ſhall baptize you with the Holy Ghoſt," verſe 11. And thus knowing the preparatory, decreaſing and terminating nature and deſign of water baptiſm, what further he wanted to know, to induce him to baptize our Lord, was, that in order properly to decreaſe and fulfil what he already knew muſt decreaſe and be fulfilled, the Lord of life and glory muſt ſtoop to it himſelf; and therefore, as ſoon as the bleſſed Jeſus had convinced him of this, he readily, without more ado, baptized him. —And of this our Lord's anſwer at once convinced him, it being full to the purpoſe. Let us trace it.

The very firſt word is inſtructive. "Suffer it to be ſo," Mat. iii. 15, as if he had ſaid—I indeed have no need of it, no ſin to repent of—nor do I wiſh it done to manifeſt me to myſelf; it is not at all of neceſſity to me in this ſenſe; thou, John, art therefore rather to ſuffer it, than adminiſter it as thou doſt to others, to teach them

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their neceſſity of a thorough cleanſing, and turn their minds to me and my baptiſm, which alone can effect it.—It is true, as thou art ſenſible, this is not my baptiſm, nor any part of my goſpel diſpenſation: mine, all have need of: thou art right in ſaying thou thyſelf haſt need to be baptized of me. And as mine is the alone goſpel baptiſm, it is not ſtrange that thou admireſt at my ſubmitting to that of water; for truly it would be highly contrary to the purity and ſimplicity of my goſpel, to perpetuate any ceremonial obſervances under the full ſunſhine thereof; but this is by no means my intention, but directly the reverſe; I do it on purpoſe to fulfil outſide things, and make way for me to introduce, and publiſh to the world, that goſpel which is after, and to end all types and ſhadows: and which, for that very reaſon, I cannot properly even begin the publication of before; but muſt, in order to a regular procedure, defer, till after I have ſubmitted to this figurative baptiſm which thou preacheſt. By which thou mayeſt clearly ſee, that in baptizing me in the figure, a thing ſo different from my unfigurative baptiſm and goſpel, thou art properly ſpeaking, to ſuffer it to be ſo. —Next the word now is ſtrikingly ſignificant. "Suffer it to be ſo now." This important word is not uſed here without ſpecial propriety and deſign—it is the dictate of eternal wiſdom; for now was the very juncture of time, now the pure unſhadowy goſpel diſpenſation was but at hand, not yet brought in. Chriſt had not yet ſuffered; nay, he had not yet even began publicly to promulgate the goſpel of that kingdom, the baptiſm of which is only ſpiritual; and therefore he might now properly partake of that which only pointed to it, and was to end in it. And further, now

was the exact period for him to do what he had to do outwardly in fulfilling it; becauſe John had now preached the baptiſm of repentance to many, if not literally, as Paul ſays, to all the people of Iſrael, Acts xiii. 24, perhaps to nearly, or quite all, in thoſe parts.—At leaſt, according to Mat. iii. 5, we may conclude, they of Jeruſalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, had now been baptized of John, and Chriſt was now ſoon to begin his own goſpel miniſtry, and therein to preach the kingdom of heaven, as an internal unfigurative diſpenſation, to the ſouls of men. Now therefore was the very time, in the courſe and order of things, for him to be baptized in outward water; the acceptable moment for John to ſuffer it to be ſo. John had, as he baptized the people, diligently preached the kingdom at hand, not yet fully come, and taught them to look beyond his outward, to Chriſt's inward and ſaving baptiſm.—This he powerfully and poſitively declared ſhould be effected by one then among them, though they knew him not. So near was the kingdom now at hand, and faſt approaching. This greatly raiſed their expectations. Indeed the fire of Chriſt's baptiſm began to kindle in ſome of their hearts; for Chriſt declares he came to ſend fire on the earth; "and what will I" (ſays he) "if it be already kindled?" Luke xii. 49. It truly was ſo in ſome degree in many minds, even that very fire whereby his baptiſm thoroughly cleanſes, in its complete operation, the whole floor of the heart. Therefore it was now time for him ſoon to begin his public goſpel teſtimony, which in ſtrict propriety ought to, and in fact did, ſucceed, not precede, the baptiſm of water, which was John's—and by which, and the preaching attending

tending it, John had thus prepared the people for Chriſt's according to the expreſs deſign of his miſſion; which was, as noted before, "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

John's preaching, baptiſm, and ſingular life, being in the deſert till the time of his ſhewing unto Iſrael, then wearing a leathern girdle, and coat of camels hair, neither eating fleſh nor drinking wine, but eating locuſts and wild honey, &c. wrought greatly on the minds of many. They muſed much of John; and were anxious to know, whether he were the Chriſt or not. John declared honeſtly he was not; but that he was vaſtly unworthy, in compariſon of him—that his baptiſm was but with water, a very inferior thing, compared with Chriſt's—deſigned to prepare for it, and juſt ſerving in order to his manifeſtation to Iſrael, and then to decreaſe and give place to him and his baptiſm, which is to increaſe, and of the increaſe whereof there is no end.—John was truly modeſt, and ſought not to defraud Chriſt of any of his glory; but honeſtly and openly both confeſſed his own inferiority, and turned the people's attention from himſelf to his Lord, ſaying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the ſin of the world," John i. 29.—Thus the time haſtened—the ſtate of things ripened.—Indeed the "kingdom of heaven ſuffered violence." And the minds of ſome, under the preſſure of what they felt working in them, ruſhed into it as it were by force; that is, before the full time for its more glorious and ample diſplay and eſtabliſhment, which was not to be till Chriſt had ſuffered.—Hence, ſays Jeſus, Mat. xi. 12, "from the days of John the Baptiſt, until now, the kingdom of heaven ſuffereth violence, and the vio-

lent take it by force." Their hearts were so engaged, and the working of the seed or leaven of the kingdom was so prevalent in them, that, as it were by a kind of violent anticipation, they took, or obtained, some real possession and enjoyment of the pure antitypical life, liberty, power and substance of the spiritual kingdom of God; before that more glorious out-breaking, and more general establishment and exaltation thereof among the people, which took place after Christ had suffered, and had fulfilled all the symbolical righteousness of signs and shadows, and triumphed over them all, nailing them to his cross? thus ascending up on high, leading captivity captive, and bountifully giving gifts unto men.

And why is the kingdom said to suffer this kind of violence from the days of John the Baptist, but because the power of his ministry, his living testimony concerning Christ, and his baptism had greatly wrought upon their hearts? John's preaching and description of Christ's baptism was very awakening—he struck against all false dependencies—nothing would do short of fruits worthy of a state of real unfeigned repentance; no claims of outward descent from Abraham —nor any mere plungings in water, no partial cleansings or half-way reformations; not one or two only, but every corrupt tree of the whole heart must be hewn down, and cast into the fire. Thus the axe was now laid to the very root of the tree; lopping the branches only would not do— it must come to thorough work, even to burning up all the chaff, and gathering the wheat, winnowed therefrom, into the garner of the Lord. —This doctrine was so forcibly promulgated by John, and had such effect upon some who were

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waiting for the conſolation of Iſrael, that it was now time for Jeſus to ſubmit to John's baptiſm, in order to the fulfilment of the typical righteouſneſs thereof, and to make way for the word, goſpel and antitypical righteouſneſs of his own inward and ſpiritual kingdom among them.—Thus urgent and preſſing was the neceſſity of our Lord's ſoon entering upon his own public miniſtration in the work of the everlaſting goſpel, and which he accordingly did enter upon almoſt immediately after John's impriſonment.—Well therefore might he, as to his baptiſm in water, urge it upon John to "ſuffer it to be ſo now," juſt now, without further delay: for thus it becometh us, ſays he, to fulfil all righteouſneſs.—Obſerve the word all—for even the moſt outward, typical and decreaſing inſtitutions, that had really been of God, of right demanded veneration; it was a point of real righteouſneſs rightly to obſerve, and rightly to fulfil them. And as Chriſt came to "blot out the hand-writing of ordinances, and take it out of the way," (ſee Col. ii. 13) and ſo to bring his people to a ſingle attention to the new covenant written in the heart, and of which he himſelf is mediator; it did truly and highly become him, ſeeing he came not to redeem from the bondage of the law, and rudiments or ſhadows of good things, by deſtroying; but by fulfilling, to unite with John in fulfilling water baptiſm; for that could no more paſs rightly away, till it was fulfilled, than any other outward ordinance. —All the ſhadows were but for a time, and to end in the ſubſtance—and ſo faithful was Chriſt in all his work and office, that he would not ſuffer a jot or tittle to paſs from the law, till all was fulfilled. Hence on the ſame ground he

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ſays to John, "it becometh us to fulfil all righteouſneſs." The righteouſneſs of that ordinance of water baptiſm, was at beſt but under or during the law of outward commandments. Immerſion in water was enjoined and had often been practiſed among the Jews before, and baptiſm was in ſome ſort and on ſome occaſions uſed as an initiatory ordinance among them. John indeed uſed it ſomewhat differently, but both he himſelf and his baptiſm were previous to the abrogation of the ceremonial law, which continued in force till ſeveral years after he had quite fulfilled his courſe, even till our Lord's reſurrection.

INDEED Jeſus himſelf enjoined its punctual obſervance; ſo true is the Apoſtle's teſtimony, that he was "made under the law," Gal. iv. 4; and was under tutors and governors till the time appointed of the Father, verſe 2: ſo that the expreſſions of the law and Prophets prophecying until John, are of no more authority to diſprove John's being ſtrictly under the law, than they are to diſprove his being ſtrictly a prophet.

CHRIST declares him a Prophet, yea and more than a Prophet. And his being more than a Prophet, is the true ground of this diſtinction reſpecting the law and the Prophets prophecying until John; not that either the law or the Prophets had then ceaſed, but John, as great a Prophet as any born of woman, and as truly under the law, was alſo ſo much more than a Prophet, that he was the immediate forerunner of our Lord; a voice proclaiming him not as coming afar off, but as then ſtanding among the people, or as it were a finger pointing directly to him, as then

then come in that body of flesh. And it is remarkable, how much John's preaching and testimony concerning Christ are confined to his soul-purifying baptism. This, and a plain, full and repeated destination and description of the very great difference between this and that with water, seems to be the main scope and subject with John. And there is much divine wisdom and propriety in its being so; for John was the only administrator of water baptism, even specially ordained, and sent of God, as such. He ran not of himself, as it is to be feared many now do; God sent him, yea sent him expressly to baptize with water, according to John i. 33; and why? plainly "that Christ might be made manifest to Israel," as before noticed.

Now, therefore, as baptism in water was that peculiar outward action, or ordinance, which was chosen and directed of God, to prepare the way of his Son, introduce and manifest him to Israel; we may depend upon it, it was because he would have him specially manifested and introduced to their notice and acceptance, as the great gospel baptizer, refiner and purifier of souls.—In short, the baptism of Christ comprehends so much, so nearly all, in the work of sanctification, and creation anew in him, that the Father Almighty, in his unlimited goodness, and good will to men, took special care that John, the preparer of his way, in the power and spirit of Elias, should be expressly sent before him, baptizing in water, as a lively resemblance and representation of his great work, in thoroughly cleansing the floor of the heart. This was John's proper business. Hence he is repeatedly and almost constantly called John

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the Baptiſt, or baptizer, as ſome tranſlate it. He went before the face of the Lord, (baptizing men's bodies) to prepare his way as the baptizer of ſouls. For this reaſon, he dwells almoſt wholly on the deſcription of Chriſt's baptiſm, the manner of his effecting it, the operations and effects of it, and the very great ſuperiority of it to that of water.

In words, he fully and forcibly inculcates, that in its complete operation it effects an entire purification—no corrupt or even unfruitful tree is to be left—nor chaff remaining with the wheat.—The fire of this baptiſm is holy, yea the fire of the Holy Ghoſt; and where the heart ſubmits to its influence, it is, ſo long as filth remaineth, truly unquenchable; it burns till all is conſumed, till the droſs, and tin, and, what is more, the reprobate ſilver (however ſpecious in appearance, and current among many for true devotion, and real religion) is ſeparated and done away from the gold; for the veſſels in the Lord's houſe ſpiritually are made of beaten gold, ſuch as have endured the Lord's fire, and been refined in his furnace; for this only can bear the hammer, ſo as thereby to be beaten and formed into choſen veſſels in his holy houſe, which "holineſs becometh forever." See Pſalm xciii. 5. And as his houſe is a houſe of holineſs; ſo the way of his ranſomed is a "way of holineſs; the unclean ſhall not paſs over it," Iſai. xxxv. 8. None can walk in it but in proportion as they are baptized with the Holy Ghoſt, and purifying fire, and thus made fit veſſels for the Lord's houſe; for the Prophet Zachariah, xiv. 21, winds up his prophecy of goſpel times with a poſitive declaration, that in

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that day "every pot in Jeruſalem and in Judah ſhall be holineſs unto the Lord of Hoſts."

That this ſtate might be attained, we have ſeen that John's deſcription of Chriſt's baptiſm, even to the very inhabitants of Jeruſalem and Judea, outwardly (though I think little of locality in this caſe) repreſents it as effecting thorough purification, as perfecting holineſs in the fear of the Lord. And this he not only teaches in words, but ſhews them in his manner of baptizing, plunging them all over in water, as if he would have riveted it in their minds, that nothing ſhort of complete ſatisfaction would anſwer.

He indeed baptized them in water, and even, in that, though merely a figure of the one goſpel baptiſm, he plainly held forth perfection, or perfect cleanſing, or why did he waſh them all over? If Chriſt's baptiſm effects only a partial, half-way cleanſing in thislife, would not a partial, half-way, waſhing, or ſprinkling, more properly have repreſented it, and therefore have been a more proper way to have prepared the way of the Lord, and furthered his manifeſtation to Iſrael?

Surely his forerunner ought ſo to prepare his way, as to give a juſt idea of him, and of his work; and ſo to repreſent and ſhadow out his baptiſm, as to raiſe proper ſentiments and deſires in the well diſpoſed reſpecting it. And this, in fact, he was very careful to do; for as he was ſo much more than a Prophet, that he was ſpecially appointed, and ſent to prepare Chriſt's way, and eminently to contribute, by that very ſignificant figure, towards his proper manifeſta-

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tion to Iſrael, he fell not behind the reſt of the Prophets in teſtimony to the fulneſs and completeneſs of that baptiſm, whereby Chriſt ſaves his people, not in but from their ſins. He was ſo faithful to his truſt, that, not ſatisfied with repeated metaphorical illuſtrations of it by word of mouth, as of the axe, fan, and fire, yea unquenchable fire, all centering in one-point, that of abſolute and full purification; he went one ſtep further; he dipped great numbers of them ſo totally into the water, that if they would underſtand any thing by it of the nature and extent of Chriſt's baptiſm, they could ſcarcely underſtand any thing ſhort of what was typically intended by it. And having thus powerfully prepared the way of the Lord, by preparing the people to receive him in the adminiſtration of that baptiſm which ſaves the ſoul from ſin, it was now time for the Lord himſelf to be baptized, in that very figure by which his baptiſm was thus ſtrikingly repreſented; not to perpetuate it, and induce the people to think more highly of it; but, quite on the contrary, ſo far to fulfil it, as to make way for that repreſented by it. For thoſe outward obſervances, by which the ſubſtance was repreſented (as the figure of a man repreſents the man it is the figure of) were none of them any more the ſubſtance itſelf, than the figure of a man is the man.

Some are very fond of the mere picture, the lifeleſs figure of their deareſts friends, in their abſence; but few are ſo weak as to pay much regard to the picture, when they are in actual enjoyment of the preſence, the endearing company, and ſweet converſation of their friends.

Water

Water baptiſm is not a whit more the baptiſm of Chriſt, than the figure of a man is the man. And they who are now baptized therewith, and eat and drink outward bread and wine, in remembrance of Chriſt, have, in theſe performances abſtractedly, no more of the real baptiſm and ſupper of the Lord, than a man may have of his friend, in the picture of him. I ſay not that a man cannot uſe theſe things, and at the ſame time enjoy ſomething of the ſubſtance ſignified by them. A man may enjoy ſomething of the real and delightful preſence of his friend, and yet have his picture in the room, and ſometimes look at it; but whenever his attention is fixed cloſely upon the picture, it is infallibly diverted in the ſame proportion from his friend, though then alive and preſent. And ſo it is in theſe figurative obſervations. In proportion as they are objects of attention, the mind is diverted from, or ſtops ſhort of the thing ſignified. And hence I think it generally holds good, that thoſe who are very tenacious of them, moſt zealous in their uſe, urge them the moſt preſſingly on others, and moſt liberally cenſure and condemn thoſe, who, believing them to be no goſpel ordinances, conſcientiouſly decline them; are leſs livingly ſenſible of the life and ſubſtance, than ſome others, who, though they alſo uſe them, are far leſs built up in and tenacious of them. At the very beſt, they are but ſhadows of the good things.—"If thine eye be ſingle" (to the light of Chriſt) "thy whole body ſhall be full of light." See Mat. vi. 22. Only keep thine eye ſingle, and fixed upon the outward ſun, and the ſhadow will be behind thee, and out of thy ſight. Turn about

about, and fix thine eye full on the ſhadow, and then the ſun will be behind thee; and whilſt thou art fixed in attention to the ſhadow, thou wilt ſee little or nothing of the face of the ſun. Thus ſome who begin in the Spirit, turn about, and ſeek to be made perfect in the fleſh, or in outward ordinances. But granting thy attention not ſingly to the ſhadow, yet try it a thouſand ways, and thou ſhalt never be able to pay either leſs or more attention thereto; but thou wilt be obliged to have thy attention proportionally leſs to the ſun, than it would be, wert thou equally attentive, and that attention ſingly directed to the ſun.—In like manner, the man whoſe eye is ſingle to the divine light of Jeſus in his own heart, and whoſe attention is ſteadily to the work of his baptiſm there, has as much more true and ſubſtantial experience of the bleſſed and ſaving operation and effects thereof, than the man, who, equally attentive, ſuffers his attention to be divided, and partly diverted to the outward figures; as a man in cloſe and ſingle attention to the ſun, has more of its light, and ſees more of its real brightneſs and glory, than he who obſerves an equal attention on the whole, but ſuffers it to be divided between the ſun and the ſhadow. —And this I take to be the very ground and reaſon of our Lord's faithful fulfilment of all ſuch figurative righteouſneſs, that ſo his ſervants might preſs forward to the ſubſtance ſignified, and figured out thereby. Paul told the Galatians, "if ye be circumciſed, Chriſt ſhall profit you nothing," Gal. v. 2. This muſt amount to thus much at leaſt, that in proportion as they relied on, or were taken up with attention

to that outward performance, they were diverted from Chriſt—and this is juſt as true of water baptiſm, and every other outward ſymbol.—I ſuppoſe many may readily drink it down, that ſo certainly as a man is outwardly circumciſed, he can have no benefit at all from Chriſt, who yet think outward baptiſm an ordinance of his goſpel: but what ſound reaſon can be given, why one outward ordinance, once abſolutely commanded of God, but now ceaſed in point of obligation, to give place to the ſubſtance once ſignified by it, ſhould ſo much more effectually prevent our being profited by Chriſt, than another outward ordinance, in like manner once commanded of God, but long ſince as fully ceaſed in point of obligation, and for the ſame reaſon, to give place to the ſubſtance?

The truth is, every outward obſervation, whatever, ſo far as it diverts the mind from inward attention to the work of Chriſt, ſo far it prevents effectually our being profited by him. And I am ſorry to perceive ſuch numbers of profeſſing Chriſtians ſtriving ſo hard, as I think they do, to make theſe things ſerve as a ſubſtitute for that which is ſaving. They evidently ſubſtitute water baptiſm inſtead of Chriſt's; for they do not ſcruple to call it the one baptiſm of the goſpel. They expreſsly maintain it to be Chriſt's, and apply to it many texts which evidently ſpeak of far deeper matters; as baptiſm into Chriſt, into his death, &c. and that which ſpeaks of the baptiſm which now ſaves us, although the text itſelf declares it is not the putting away the filth of the fleſh (the proper work of water) yet they inſiſt it is water; and ſo make it out, if they ſub-

ſtantially make out any thing by it, that a figure ſaves us. Let none therefore marvel that Chriſt was ſo careful to be baptized in water, in order to fulfil it, before he would go forth publicly into that work, wherein he was to be the baptizer of ſouls to ſalvation; for ſince we find that even his ſo doing is laid hold of, in direct contradiction to the whole ſcope and deſign of it, and urged as a proof of its continuance, how much greater would have been the influence of his example, towards continuing a figure in preference to the ſubſtance, had he firſt publiſhed his own everlaſting goſpel and baptiſm, and after that been baptized himſelf in water, and ſo baptized others? But as it ſeems he intended not to baptize others in water, doubtleſs to guard againſt the force of example; ſo neither would he be ſo baptized himſelf, after he had once began his own public and ſoul-baptizing miniſtry; but very carefully did what he had to do in outward fulfilment of that type, both before he began his ſaid miniſtry, and before he had gathered any diſciples, yet ſo as to be after the reſt of the people in thoſe parts of the country had been baptized; for it would not have ſeemed ſo proper for him to ſubmit to an ordinance that was figurative of his own baptiſm, for the ſpecial purpoſe of fulfilling it, before its adminiſtrator had, for ſome little time at leaſt, practiſed it; but now John having baptized many, and raiſed their hopes of a more ſpiritual and ſoul-ſaving baptiſm, or, as Luke has it, "when all the people" (meaning doubtleſs there about Jordan) "were baptized, it came to paſs that Jeſus alſo being baptized,"

tized," &c. and we do not read of John's ever baptizing another perſon there afterwards.

Now therefore, as already evinced, was the ſuitable time for Jeſus to be baptized. And though this was done, as before urged, not to perpetuate that ſign, but expreſsly to fulfil it, that ſo all that kind of ceremonial righteouſneſs might be fulfilled, and not a jot or tittle of it paſs any otherwiſe away; yet this hindered not the propriety of John's continuing his preaching and ſervice in that ſign, in other places, a while longer, in order to Chriſt's manifeſtation, and the preparation of his way before him, there alſo, until nearly the time that Chriſt began to publiſh the word openly in and from Galilee: though before Chriſt would do this, John had, as already proved, finiſhed his courſe in that figurative diſpenſation, and our Lord had particularly heard of his impriſonment. After which, going into Galilee, he ſoon entered upon the publication of that ſpiritually baptizing word and goſpel miniſtration, which, as before obſerved, began from thence, after the baptiſm which John preached, in the figure.

When John proclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God," two of John's own diſciples immediately "followed Jeſus," John i. 36, 37, as did ſeveral others ſoon after; for John's preaching, &c. had now in good degree prepared their minds to follow him, as ſoon as they knew him. But the diſciples of John do not appear to have gone from him to Jeſus, as from one outward bap-

tizer to another. We have no account of their receiving baptiſm in water, after they became followers of Jeſus. As that was not his, but John's, there was no need of repeating it upon thoſe who had been John's diſciples. But had that of water been Chriſt's, and yet diſtinct from John's, they would doubtleſs have received it. —John's preaching and baptiſm in water do not appear to have prepared the way of the Lord, by preparing people for a ſecond baptiſm in water? but by preparing them for that of the Holy Ghoſt, and purifying fire. For this were ſome hearts at leaſt, if not many, now prepared.

Now therefore cometh Jeſus to be baptized of John in Jordan; for it was now time thoſe knew him, who were thus prepared for him, that they might receive him. His thus coming to John, and being firſt baptized in the type, and then in the antitype, the Holy Ghoſt from heaven, confirmed John's knowledge of him, and gave a fair occaſion for him to point him out, and proclaim him as the baptizer and Saviour of ſouls to the people; thus opening their way to advance from the ſign to the ſubſtance; from the decreaſing miniſtration of himſelf, the ſervant and forerunner, to the increaſing one of the Son and Saviour. John could not with full confidence point him out to them, till he knew him: That could not in proper ſeaſon and ſucceſſion take place, by which he certainly knew him to be the great goſpel Baptizer, till he had firſt baptized him in the figure, ſeeing the figures are the ſhadows of good things to come after them.

Had

Had Jeſus received water baptiſm much ſooner, it had been out of ſeaſon, and before his way was prepared by his forerunner. Had he deferred it much longer, it had deferred their knowledge and reception of him, whoſe hearts were now prepared for him.—And, moreover, had he deferred it till John was caſt into priſon, whence he never came out, he could not have publicly received it by John; by which reception of it from him, and thus rightly timed, he at once confirmed it, as having been a ſign of his own; fulfilled it, as of no real uſe where his own is livingly known; and gave John fair opportunity clearly to know him, and proclaim him the Lamb of God, that taketh away the ſins of the world.

Thus John teſtified of him in due time, agreeably to Paul's expreſſion, 1 Tim. ii. 6, "who gave himſelf a ranſom for all, to be teſtified in due time." Having ſeen that Chriſt's baptiſm in the figure could be only ſuffered; ſeeing the figures precede, point to, but belong not to the goſpel, and that now, before the figurative diſpenſation was aboliſhed, was the only proper and acceptable time for it. Let us obſerve, who were the only proper perſons to fulfil that one peculiar ſign and figure of ſaving baptiſm—"ſuffer it to be ſo now, for thus it becometh us." John, as the ordained adminiſtrator of water baptiſm, and as ſuch, and peculiarly therein, the forerunner of Chriſt, and Chriſt, as the end and ender of all types and ſhadows, were the identical perſons to unite in fulfilling this decreaſing and terminating diſpenſation. Hence the divine propriety of the word us: "thus it becometh us." But

what to do? not eſtabliſh and perpetuate the old Moſaic inſtitutions, in a round of ſigns and ceremonies, nor any other new or ſomewhat varied obſervations in things outward and ſymbolical; for all theſe are but rudiments, and equally weak and unappertaining to the pure goſpel ſtate. What then? why, the exact reverſe of all this. "It becometh us to fulfil;" fulfil what? "all righteouſneſs." None of the great and ſolemn ordinances of God were ſo outward as to be unworthy of fulfilment. All pointed to Chriſt, and to his work and kingdom: but this of water baptiſm, as now uſed by John, and by him repeatedly contraſted with Chriſt's, or the two placed by him very pointedly, as type and antitype, required our Lord's ſpecial notice and fulfilment, previouſly to his own public goſpel miniſtration. And though, as then uſed, it was introduced the laſt in courſe of the great ſhadows peculiarly repreſentative of Chriſt's great work in men; yet was it almoſt, if not quite, the firſt ſpecially fulfilled by him.

John's miniſtration in the ſhadow, began too near the meridian ſplendour of Chriſt, the goſpel ſun, to have any long continuance previous to his glorious manifeſtation to Iſrael.—Even outwardly, as the ſun advances nearer to its meridian altitude, the length of the ſhadow decreaſes. And right under the ſun's full blaze, the ſun being in its zenith point, ſhining on all ſides equally, the ſhadow vaniſhes, or at leaſt is under foot. And I believe it has inwardly, even in reſpect of baptiſm, vaniſhed quite out of eſtimation and notice in the minds of ſome, as the ſpiritual ſun has gradually ariſen upon them; and who yet have

have afterwards, through the neglect of a single eye to the light, gradually receded therefrom, till (as in the afternoon outwardly) towards night, in proportion as the sun's warming and enlivening influence is lessened, the length and unsubstantial importance of the empty shadow has greatly increased with them—they have eagerly grasped at the shadow, which in itself is nothing but a likeness of the substance.—We all know a shadow outwardly is nothing—and in spirituals also this is so strictly true, that Paul says, "circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing," 1 Cor. vii. 19; and it holds equally in outward baptism, and the supper.—If one shadow were any thing in the gospel, another might as well be something.—Circumcision would be as much something as baptism.—The gospel excludes them all.

Let not therefore him who is outwardly baptized suppose he has therein something that belongs to the gospel; neither let him who rejects it, either Quaker or other, think he therefore has something; for outward baptism is nothing evangelical, and the mere rejection of it is nothing.—"the new creature," the living faith of the operation of God, working by love, is all in all, is the very substance of things hoped for, "the evidence of things not seen," Heb. xi. 1. Thus necessary was it for all these old things to pass away, be shaken and fulfilled, that the new and living substance, which cannot be shaken, may remain.—And as John was the forerunner of Christ, and the administrator of water baptism, it belonged to him and Jesus; they were the *us*, to whose allotment it properly fell to fulfil it.—Christ had the typical righteousness of divers

other figures to fulfil; hence, afterwards he celebrated the paſſover, and plainly pointed his diſciples to the antitype of it. They muſt eat his fleſh, and drink his blood, or have no life in them. And this he aſſures them is ſpiritual, "it is the ſpirit that quickeneth, the fleſh profiteth nothing," John vi. 63. And even John's work, in fulfilling theſe things, was not wholly confined to the outward baptiſm of our Lord. His conſtant teſtimony that his baptiſm was but with water, as he adminiſtered it to others, his lively and contradiſtinguiſhing deſcription of Chriſt's, as that which effects entire ſanctification, and burns up all the chaff (not only ſin, but figurative ceremonial obſervations; for theſe are as chaff to the wheat, and as trees that bring not forth any real good fruits of the goſpel) tended much to exalt the ſubſtance above all ſigns in the minds of the people. And when once the ſubſtance is in due eſtimation, and properly exalted over all in our minds, under the goſpel, the ſign immediately loſes its importance, and Chriſt becomes all in all to us.

But John not only divers times repeats the important diſtinction between baptiſm with water, and that with the Holy Ghoſt, and holds to view the comparative inefficacy, and derceaſing nature and deſign of the one, and the excellency, all-ſufficiency and increaſing nature of the other: he degrades all claims of the moſt exact and tenacious adherents to ceremonial inſtitutions, without the heart-purifying work of the Lord.

Even the zealous phariſees, notwithſtanding all they could boaſt of relationſhip to Abraham, either by blood, by circumciſion, or the moſt

ſtrict

ſtrict and ſcrupulous outward obſervance of the whole law of commandments, contained in (the ſhadowy) ordinances, he upbraids as a generation of vipers; and plainly intimates to them, that the true ſeed of Abraham are they in whom the axe, the fan, and the fire of the goſpel make thorough work; and that in this way God is able to raiſe up children in the true and living faith of faithful Abraham, of ſuch whoſe hearts were as ſtones. There might be ſuch then preſent, whoſe diſregard to thoſe things, wherein lay nearly all the religion of too many of the phariſees, was ſuch as to render them extremely obnoxious and contemptible in their view, and who yet were more eaſy to be brought in love with the eſſentials of true religion than they; though they, in the fury of their zeal againſt theſe, might ſtrikingly exhibit the viper in ſpirit. I believe the inward feelings and outward deportment of many, who have conſiderable zeal in exteriors, are the very reverſe of this, in meekneſs, gentleneſs and love.

May they experience a bleſſed increaſe herein; and may all ranks and denominations of Chriſtians, beholding the excellency hereof, and its vaſt importance, in preference to all party attachments, and zeal for or againſt ceremonials, more and more preſs after it and into it themſelves, and cheriſh and promote it in each other.

I doubt not many of the phariſees were zealouſly obſervant of the Moſaic inſtitutions, becauſe they verily believed it was God's will they ſhould be ſo (as doubtleſs it was in a right way and diſpoſition.) I doubt not but ſome of theſe were moral, goodly ſort of men, as to outward regularity, uprightneſs, and honeſt dealing, and here they

they reſted, well ſatisfied, and deſpiſed the leſs obſervant, and leſs regular. But here reſting (even though they might be, as touching every thing merely ceremonial, or even merely moral, pretty blameleſs) they were and muſt be far ſhort of that, which in every age of the world has been the true righteouſneſs, riches, and ſalvation of ſouls. Theſe, as well as the more impure and groſsly polluted within, John wanted to alarm, and ſhake from their falſe reſt, and fig-leaf covering; that they might come to know the pure and living righteouſneſs of faith, that works by love, purifies the heart, gives victory, removes mountains, and is the ſubſtance, being of the operation of God in the heart; not a mere aſſent to certain well-eſtabliſhed facts, nor yet merely a full and firm perſuaſion of their truth and certainty; but a real and living hold on Chriſt the life, in inward union with him; by a deep and powerful working of the holy principle of light and life in the ſoul. This is that righteouſneſs which exceeds that of the ſcribes and phariſees, and without which Chriſt ſays we cannot enter into the heavenly kingdom. See Mat. v. 20. This, in fulneſs eſtabliſhed, ſupercedes all ſigns and ſhadows. Hence John, by rejection of the phariſaical dependence on deſcent from Abraham, &c. was preparing his way, who coming after him, had much of this nature to do, among that ſuperſtitious and bigotted people; who, as he rightly teſtified, had they been truly the children of Abraham, would have done the works of Abraham; but not being truly his ſeed, in the heavenly birth, and holy principle of life and immortality, wherein the joint heirſhip with Chriſt ever conſiſted, they were fooliſhly, though zealouſly, endeavouring to climb up ſome other way;

way; by outward performances, and exact obſervation of ordinances; a kind of righteouſneſs which never gave admittance, or brought into the kingdom. And as men have ever been prone to ſtop ſhort in theſe, and rely more or leſs upon them, as things of ſubſtantial benefit in themſelves; God was pleaſed, in the fulneſs of time, to ſend his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, and purpoſely brought under the obſervance of theſe things, for their fulfilment, in order expreſsly to blot out, remove and take out of the way; that a more ſingle attention might take place to the writing of the law in the heart; the very life, ſum and ſubſtance of the new covenant. See Jer. xxxi. 33. John's preaching tended directly to prepare for and introduce an increaſing attention to theſe great things within, and thus powerfully contributed to promote that living acquaintance with, and ſingle dependence on the ſubſtance, which is the only thing that ever rightly qualifies the mind to ſee beyond, and thoroughly, underſtandingly, and profitably renounces and relinquiſhes the ſign. This was fulfilling his commiſſion, preparing the way of the Lord, pointing out, declaring and promoting the decreaſe of all figurative righteouſneſs, including even that of his own baptiſm; and aſſiſting in the fulfilment thereof, in order to the increaſe, eſtabliſhment and general prevalency of that which was before all ſigns, and remains to the faithful, the *ſummum bonum*, the one good thing needful, the life and ſubſtance of all true religion.

CHAP.

## CHAP. II.

*John's baptiſm ſtill in uſe after Chriſt was baptized; and on what grounds. Why John muſt* decreaſe. *Why the leaſt in the kingdom is greater than he. Water baptiſm never a goſpel ordinance, any more than burnt offerings, circumciſion, &c. Chriſt's transfiguration clearly ſhows all theſe, done away together, and water baptiſm as much as any of them though afterwards ſometimes uſed in condeſcenſion, as divers other figures were. John ſeen in the mount as Elias. Peter's conduct with Cornelius, no perpetuation of water; but rather a prudent condeſcenſion. The full diſpenſation of Chriſt, is* God *and* man *in union. Man prone to imagery. Signs were ever by indulgence. A touch upon the paſſover. Chriſt eating it, points to its antitype, the inward feaſt, and communion of ſaints.*

ALTHOUGH on very ſufficient grounds, as already evinced, our bleſſed Lord received that baptiſm which was figurative of his own, and ſo far as in that manner behoved him fulfilled it, previouſly to his entrance on his own public miniſtration, in preaching the goſpel, yet for his further manifeſtation to Iſrael in ſome other places,

places, that watery ſign, and the preaching accompanying it, were afterwards continued by John, till ſome little time before the bleſſed Jeſus began his ſaid public miniſtry? and the diſciples of Jeſus having learned that baptiſm of John, and underſtanding it was for their Lord's manifeſtation to Iſrael, they alſo practiſed it, and doubtleſs with a view and deſire of his more extenſive and ſpeedy manifeſtation among the people; though we have no account that Chriſt ever at all encouraged them therein, but an expreſs aſſurance that he "himſelf baptized not," John iv. 2. Perhaps he might have no objection (as ceremonials were yet in uſe, as a ſchool-maſter leading to himſelf, the life and ſubſtance, the pure goſpel ſtate not generally commencing till after his reſurrection) to their baptizing others, as John had them, in the figure; well knowing that occaſion might thereby be taken to turn the mind profitably from that likeneſs of entire cleanſing, to the neceſſity of the thing itſelf, his own ſaving baptiſm; and which ſeems to have been the very deſign of water baptiſm, as uſed by John. No other need of it ſeems ever to have exiſted; and no other end ſeems to have been aimed at, by the divine wiſdom, in ſending John baptizing in that manner. It was to that end well adapted, and to that only.—And that John knew this, ſeems evident by his declaring that baptiſm was for Chriſt's manifeſtation, by his ſo conſtantly pointing from it to its antitype,* the baptiſm

* The word in the common tranſlation rendered figure, 1 Pet. iii. 21; ſpeaking of the baptiſm which now ſaves us is antitypon; and ſurely it is the antitype, and not the type or figure, that is saving.

that

that ſaves the ſoul; and by his acknowledgment that himſelf muſt decreaſe, and Chriſt increaſe. Had John been the adminiſtrator of a goſpel ordinance, and therein abode faithful, he might, inſtead of decreaſing, have increaſed therein: but being the adminiſtrator of a figurative ordinance, in its very nature, end and deſign, decreaſing; he, as its adminiſtrator, muſt decreaſe: for though as great a Prophet as any born of woman, yea, as Chriſt declares, "much more than a Prophet," the immediate forerunner and preparer of the way of the Lord; yet truly, as the Lord himſelf further aſſerts, Mat. xi. 2, "he that is leaſt in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he;" that is, greater than John, as John the Baptiſt; for it is expreſsly as John the Baptiſt, that Chriſt ſays this of him; and in this ſenſe it will forever hold true. For though as a ſaint and ſervant of God, as a Prophet of the Moſt High, John was great, yea very great in the heavenly kingdom, "a burning and a ſhining light," as Chriſt ſtill further teſtifies, John v. 35, yet that goſpel kingdom which John proclaimed as near at hand, and prepared the way for, being void of all mere figurative ordinances, and operating wherever it cometh in its full glory to their fulfilment, abolition, out-blotting, and entire removal out of the way; the leaſt in the pure ſpirituality thereof, (having ſeen and advanced, beyond and to the diſuſe and total rejection of all ſuch ſigns and figures, as being comparatively mean and beggarly elements, of uſe only till the ſeed came, and at beſt but ſhadows of the good things to come) is and ever muſt be in this reſpect greater than John, as John the Baptiſt; the adminiſtrator of one, though a very ſignificant one, of thoſe figurative ordinances.

ordinances. And even though John ſhould ſit higher, ſhine brighter, and be far greater in the kingdom of eternal glory, than many of theſe, yet as the Baptiſt, or baptizer in water, he was under a diſpenſation that was vaſtly low in compariſon of that pure goſpel ſtate which theſe little ones all witneſs in the new covenant diſpenſation; which water baptiſm could no more be a part of, or belong to, than circumciſion, burnt-offerings, or any other rituals of the Moſaic diſpenſation. And if Moſes, however faithful in all his houſe, as a ſervant, muſt as to his law of ceremonials, his diſpenſation of ſigns and ſhadows, decreaſe and give place to the Son, ſurely ſo muſt John. The weakneſs, outwardneſs, and inſufficiency, on account of which the ſhadows of Moſes have vaniſhed, are as apparent in water baptiſm, as in any of theſe; and it is of as much real neceſſity that this be decreaſed, fulfilled, and ceaſe, in order to the true and pure enjoyment of its antitype, the ſaving baptiſm of Chriſt, as that circumciſion, and the divers waſhings and offerings of the law ſhould ceaſe, for the ſame reaſon, or in order to the right enjoyment of their antitype.

It is rather mournful to ſee ſo many religious, good people—people who love God, and are in good degree enlightened, entangled as it were in the bondage of outward and typical ordinances, in theſe antitypical goſpel days. What volumes of controverſy, and not always in the ſweeteſt temper, have been and are written, and from time to time, even unto this day very zealouſly ſpread, read, and rejoiced in, which yet contain little or nothing relative to the life of God in the ſoul,

ſoul, the one ſoul-ſaving, ſanctifying baptiſm of the goſpel, or the one ſoul-ſatiating communion of ſaints, and ſupper of the Lord; but are filled with learned or unlearned argumentation, about things as foreign to the true Chriſtian life and diſpenſation, as the ſacrificing of bullocks, rams, and lambs!

I feel real tenderneſs towards thoſe who are not yet ſo tranſlated into the glorious liberty of the ſons of God, not yet ſo enlightened as to riſe ſuperior to their attachments to elementary and figurative obſervances; and I wiſh not unneceſſarily to hurt the feelings of one ſincere ſoul. I know ſome ſuch hold water baptiſm, and what they call the other ſacrament, in great veneration; and I do ſincerely deſire them not to take offence at my freely endeavouring to evince them to belong not to the goſpel. It is love in great ſincerity that engages me to ſhew them that theſe things ſtand exactly on a level with the long ceaſed ceremonials of the law, in point of obligation under the goſpel. It would be as ſtrictly a goſpel controverſy, were men now to write volume after volume reſpecting the due and preciſe manner of offering the ancient daily ſacrifice; as is that about immerſion and ſprinkling, or that reſpecting the various opinions and modes of adminiſtration in what is called the Lord's ſupper. Thou need have no more, O thou true-hearted Chriſtian traveller, to do with theſe, than the former: it no more imports to thy real goſpel duty, or thy growth in the divine life, to underſtand and practiſe in the moſt preciſe manner, according to ancient original inſtitution and uſage in theſe, than in the others. Think of what entire inſignificancy

cancy it is, to controvert points reſpecting the offering of the lambs, "one in the morning, the other at even," as ordained of old to be done day by day for a continual burnt offering, Numb. xxviii. 3, 4. Think how unimportant to diſpute, whether a fifth or a tenth part of an ephah of flour, or whether mingled with a third, fourth or eighth part of an hin of beaten oil, would now under the goſpel be the moſt acceptable meat offering to the Lord; and thou mayeſt perhaps perceive to obtain a true glimpſe at leaſt of the real inſignificancy to thy life and duty, as a Chriſtian, of all the elaborate enquiries and diſcuſſions, reſpecting either what is the proper mode, or who are the proper ſubjects of either the one or the other of the ſacraments ſo called.

But ſeeing many pious ſouls are yet under the vail in theſe things, wiſhing to ſerve God, and fearing to offend him; and ſeeing it is much for the worldly intereſt, emolument and popularity of too many who aſſume the character and office of goſpel miniſters, to keep them ſtill under this vail and covering, and in bondage to the beggarly elements; I am willing to uſe my endeavours to evince yet more fully and clearly the abſolute ceſſation and diſmiſſion of ſigns and ſymbols, as never having pertained to the fulneſs of the goſpel ſtate. I think this is clearly exhibited by our Lord at the transfiguration; and I think it as much includes John as Moſes; as much water baptiſm as circumciſion; and as much the paſſover as burnt offerings. In ſhort, it is evident to my mind, that the whole tendency and deſign of the viſion was to ſhew

the equal diſmiſſion of all thoſe ſhadows of the good things to come. And that for this reaſon; of all the holy men of old, all the great types of our Immanuel, Moſes and John in the character of Elias appeared, on this wonderful occaſion, with Chriſt and his diſciples in the mount. None elſe would have fully anſwered the deſign of the transfiguration. But theſe two, repreſenting the complete body of ſigns and ceremonies, were the identical perſons to appear and diſappear to them, and in teſtimony of the diſannulling of all thoſe foregoing ordinances, as the waſhings, oblations, &c. under Moſes, were but ſigns, and but until the full coming in of the diſpenſation of life and ſubſtance: and as the baptiſm uſed by John was alſo but a ſign, ſo now, in exhibiting the entire abolition of both, our Lord in ſome ſort did it by way of ſign or repreſentation. And as it requires ſome ſpiritual diſcernment, clearly to perceive that offerings, water baptiſm, &c. never were nor could be more than ſigns and figures, what they were particularly the ſigns and figures of, how long they were properly uſed, and when utterly aboliſhed, ſo does it alſo require ſome true illumination from on high, to read and underſtand the myſtery of transfiguration, and to ſee plainly that the whole drift and deſign of it was, to teach us that the goſpel, the kingdom, the baptiſm of Jeſus, are all inward and ſpiritual, the antitypical righteouſneſs which remains, and ever will remain to the true church; though all that typical righteouſneſs, which Chriſt ſpake of in his anſwer to John, introductory to his baptiſm in the figure, be fulfilled.

When God would ſhow Abraham, Gen. xv. that

that his ſeed ſhould be a ſtranger in a land not theirs, and after four hundred years affliction "come out with great ſubſtance," he ordered him to take an heifer, ſhe goat, ram, turtle dove, and a young pigeon. Dividing ſeveral of theſe in the midſt, he "laid each piece one againſt another." And when the ſun was going down a deep ſleep fell upon Abraham, and lo, "an horror of great darkneſs fell upon him;" and further it "came to paſs, that when the ſun went down, and it was dark, behold a ſmoaking furnace, and a burning lamp that paſſed between thoſe pieces." A very ſtriking repreſentation of Iſrael's iron furnace of affliction in Egypt, and the burning lamp, or, as the margin reads, "a lamp of fire," very beautifully betokened their joyful deliverance, when long after the angel of the Lord led them by a "pillar of fire" from the ſevere exactions of their hard-hearted enemies and taſk-maſters.—Thus dealt infinite wiſdom and goodneſs with his favoured ſervant, good old Abraham; by ſtriking repreſentations ſhewing him things to come, and divers other inſtances of ſomewhat ſimilar repreſentations might be adduced.

But paſſing them, we come now to that very important one, the transfiguration, and to unfold a little its genuine import and meaning, according to the degree of underſtanding received. I ſhall firſt endeavour to evince, that it was John the Baptiſt who, with Moſes, appeared in the mount, though under the denomination and character of Elias. It is clear that John was the Elias, that is the Elijah, whom the Lord by the Prophet promiſed to ſend to prepare the way of the

Lord, Mal. iii. 1, 4, 5. This promiſe Mark recites expreſsly as fulfilled in the coming and ſervices of John, Mark i. 2. as it is written in the Prophets, "behold I ſend my meſſenger before thy face, which ſhall prepare thy way before thee."

THAT this was John, is further evident by what the angel ſaid to John's father, good old Zacharias, Luke i. 16, 17, "many of the children of Iſrael ſhall be turned to the Lord their God—and he ſhall go before him in the ſpirit and power of Elias," &c. Indeed Chriſt's own words are full to the purpoſe: he poſitively declares, Mat. xi. 14, "if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come;" but as he did not mean that Elias was actually come again in perſon, but that John was come "in the power and ſpirit of Elias," as before mentioned; he adds, verſe 15, knowing how outward the people's minds were, and how ſpiritually dull they were of hearing, "he that hath ears to hear, let him hear." He doubtleſs knew that many could not ſo hear as to believe and receive it, in its naked ſignification, eſpecially as John had denied his being Elias. Theſe are contradictions to mere human wiſdom: the ear that underſtandingly hears them, the Lord alone openeth.

JOHN ſpake truth from the heart; for when they aſked him, "what then, art thou Elias?" John i. 21. they were ſo carnal and outward in their apprehenſions, that doubtleſs John ſaw they ſo little underſtood the ſcripture propheſies and promiſes, that they were looking for the perſonal coming

coming of Elias from heaven; and perhaps in a fiery chariot, his aſcenſion, or taking up, having been repreſented as in a chariot of fire. John anſwering their queſtion according to their ſenſe in aſking it, ſaith, "I am not;" thereby harmoniouſly coinciding with Chriſt's deſign in ſpeaking in parables; for Chriſt thanked his Father that he had "hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and revealed them unto babes," Mat. xi. 2, 5. Theſe babes are the ſame with thoſe who have ears to hear, and Chriſt ſpake in parables to concur with his Father in hiding theſe things from the pryings and inveſtigations of this world's wiſdom and prudence: for when "the diſciples came and ſaid unto him, why ſpeakeſt thou unto them in parables? Mat. xiii. 10. he anſwered and ſaid unto them," becauſe it is given unto you to know the myſteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given," verſe 11. and in conformity to theſe deſigns of Chriſt and the Father, to make fooliſh the wiſdom of this world, John anſwered, that he was not Elias; as truly he was not in the ſenſe of the queſtion, and yet in the ſenſe of heaven and of the Holy Ghoſt he was indeed Elias, yea, the only Elias that was ſent in fulfilment of the promiſe, to prepare the way of the Lord Jeſus. So that had he not come in the power and ſpirit of Elias, the promiſe, for aught that appears, had utterly failed.

This point, thus clearly eſtabliſhed in the ſacred records, contributes much towards a right underſtanding of the transfiguration. The tranſactions of this ever memorable and important ſcene, I have no doubt, were deſigned to unfold,

as far as thoſe who ſaw and heard them, or thoſe who ſince read them, have "ears to hear," the deep myſtery of the three diſpenſations of Moſes, John, and Jeſus—the entire paſſing away of all that was but typical in the two former, as things liable in their very nature, and in the deſigns of infinite wiſdom, ever meant to be ſhaken and removed; that ſo the latter, the diſpenſation of life and ſubſtance, the pure ſpiritual unſhadowy goſpel and kingdom of Chriſt, as things that cannot be ſhaken or removed, might with greater clearneſs ſucceed, and remain.

To this purpoſe the Lord of this glorious diſpenſation, after teſtifying that ſome then ſtanding there ſhould live to ſee it—that is, ſhould "not taſte of death till they had ſeen the kingdom of God come with power," Mark ix. 1—in order to prepare ſome of his diſciples for a more extenſive and clear diſcovery of its purely ſpiritual, antitypical nature and glory, and to give as it were a clue to the ſame diſcovery to others (ſee Mat. xvii. Mark ix. Luke ix.) in that and after ages, "taketh with him Peter, and James, and John" (three eminent inſtruments in the primitive church) "and leadeth them up into an high mountain, apart by themſelves." This may ſhew us, that in order to a clear reception of divine knowledge, our minds muſt both aſcend above and be ſeparated from the buſy ſcenes of mere earthly joys, cares, and aſſociations, as it were into the mount of ſequeſtration, into an holy abſtraction of ſoul, where angels aſcend and deſcend, and the converſe is at times with God. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." Here our Lord "was transfigured before them, and his raiment

raiment became ſhining, exceeding white as ſnow, ſo as no fuller on earth can white them. And there appeared unto them Elias, with Moſes, and they were talking with Jeſus. And Peter anſwered and ſaid to "Jeſus, Maſter, it is good for us to be here." Alas! too many think it is good to retain the long ſince fulfilled and abrogated ſymbols of good things, to this very day; and not content with, or not enough acquainted with the one true "tabernacle of God, that is inwardly with men," Rev. xxi. 3. are, with Peter, for building three, in order to retain a little from the ceremonies of Moſes, as the paſſover (which they dignify with the name of the Lord's ſupper) and a little from John (here ſeen as Elias, in whoſe life, power, and ſpirit, John came) to wit, water baptiſm. So Peter, ignorantly thinking it good to remain, where all three might have place together, propoſeth, or aſks liberty, as followeth: "let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, one for Moſes, and one for Elias; for he wiſt not what to ſay," Mark ix. 2. 7. In very deed, he wiſt not, or, according to Luke's account, knew not what he ſaid: knew not that this propoſal ſtruck directly againſt the ſimplicity of the goſpel, and was contrary to the life and deſign of the transfiguration.

He was for buildings which belong not to the goſpel day; tabernacles for thoſe whoſe diſpenſations were but preparatory to that which is purely of Jeſus: for there was a cloud that overſhadowed them. Oh! that it may be ſeen, and daily conſidered, how exactly this is the caſe now, with thoſe who ſtill think it good to remain under the ſhadows. Is not the cloud ſtill over them? The ſigns under Moſes and John

(here Elias) pointed men to Chriſt; but the full diſpenſation of Jeſus, is nothing ſhort of God and man in heavenly union. As then in him, ſo now, in all the ſeed, all his true diſciples, there is a real joining and uniting of the life of man in and with the life of God in the ſoul. "He that is joined to the Lord is one ſpirit," Cor. vi. 17.

This is livingly taught us in the Chriſt of God, being truly both the Son of God and the Son of Man. Here all preceding diſpenſations end; the ſigns are ſuperceded; Chriſt becomes our one life in the heavenly fellowſhip, and, as Paul ſays, "I live; yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me," Gal. ii. 20. Here we enjoy the true riches and glory of his inheritance in the ſaints, which is Chriſt in us the hope of glory. See Eph. i. 18. Col. i. 27.—What can all the ſhadows of the good things to come do for thoſe who poſſeſs and enjoy the good things themſelves, are led unto, live and act in the life and ſubſtance pointed at by all the types and figures of old? Did Chriſtians know and enjoy this myſtery in its true fulneſs and glory, all old things would be done away; for here all things become new; all things of God; here we are complete in Jeſus, in whom the fulneſs dwells; and have no need at all of ſigns to perfect us in our Chriſtian duty: no need of outward waſhing, being waſhed in his blood, inwardly ſprinkled, to the cleanſing of the heart: no need of outward circumciſion—our circumciſion and baptiſm are in Chriſt—into death with him, putting off the body of the ſins of the fleſh: no need of eating bread and drinking wine, in remembrance of him, ſeeing he has become our life; we enjoy his ſoul-ſatiating

ing, his all conſolating preſence—he ſups with us, and we with him—eating the bread of life, and drinking the new wine of ſalvation with us in the heavenly kingdom of his Father, inwardly and ſpiritually—where all types ceaſe for ever---where the faith which is the very ſubſtance of things hoped for, the new creature in this union of God and man, is all in all.—Here every thought is "brought into captivity to the obedience of Chriſt," 2 Cor. x. 5. No mere outward obſervations can add any thing uſeful to this ſtate; and this is the reaſon why they muſt and do here ceaſe. The reaſon why they were once uſed was, that men were too much alienated from the life and ſubſtance—they were uſed as outward pointers to the inward life.—When the reſurrection of Chriſt, the life is fully known in us, all mere ſigns are, and in the very nature of things, muſt be, entirely ſuperceded. Till then, we may be in a ſtate of mixture, as many are with their three tabernacles, one for Jeſus, one for John, and one for Moſes. Hence the figurative diſpenſation was not altogether aboliſhed outwardly, till Chriſt's outward reſurrection; this being generally the caſe in the inward. Thoſe who have not known this pretty fully in themſelves, are moſtly ſome way or other relying more or leſs on outward things; but they whoſe life is fully and truly in him, who is the reſurrection and the life, are got beyond all improper reliance on any thing but the life of Jeſus in them—this is the plain reaſon why the antitypical baptiſm, which now ſaves us, is by the reſurrection of Chriſt---not by waſhing in water to put away the filth of the fleſh---for though ſome of the tranſlators uſe the word figure in a text which ſpeaks plainly

plainly of this ſpiritual baptiſm, it is not ſo in the Greek. The original word, as already noted, is antitypon: ſo that the ſaving baptiſm, there ſpoken of, and which is by the reſurrection and life of Chriſt, is not a figure, but the very antitype itſelf.---Had Peter known this at the time of the transfiguration, as well as he did when he wrote his epiſtles, it is in no wiſe probable that he would have thought the building of tabernacles, for the retention of ſigns and ſhadows, a goſpel labour: but ſeeing Peter was as yet ſo far from a clear underſtanding of the nature and pure ſpirituality of the goſpel, as to propoſe three tabernacles even then, juſt when Chriſt was ſpecially opening the diſmiſſion of all but one, that is " the tabernacle of God, that " is with men," Rev. xxi. 3; let none marvel that this ſame Peter afterwards commanded the houſhold of Cornelius to be baptized in water, a thing in no wiſe ſtrange for him to do, even though it had not been done merely in condeſcenſion, as there is much reaſon to believe it was. He remained for ſome time too outward and limited in his ideas; he did not know that the goſpel was an univerſal thing, extending to Gentiles as well as Jews---ſo that a wonderful viſion was vouchſafed, to remove his ſcruples, and induce his viſit to Cornelius—and when there, God gave him words ſuitable to the occaſion, and which being delivered in the evidence and demonſtration of the Spirit, and with divine power, were eminently inſtrumental to their baptiſm with the Holy Ghoſt who heard him, even in ſuch a remakable manner, that at his firſt utterance, as he began to ſpeak, the Holy Ghoſt fell on them.

This at once ſtruck Peter, as being an exact and gracious performance of the promiſſory word of the Lord Jeſus—"John indeed baptized with water, but ye ſhall be baptized with the Holy Ghoſt." See Acts xi. 15, 16. For this baptiſm was now ſo evidently diſpenſed through Peter's preaching, that he immediately remembered this precious promiſe of our bleſſed Lord—which had been very illy applied by him to the Holy Ghoſt falling on them, had that not been ſtrictly the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt, as intended by the promiſe—nor indeed can any, who clearly know this baptiſm, think ſtrange of Peter's recollecting this promiſe, and applying it to what took place at this memorable ſeaſon; nor is there any doubt with me but that the Holy Ghoſt brought it to his remembrance, and ſhewed him it was now actually performed through himſelf as an inſtrument; for God had truly and eminently enabled him to execute, in a very exact and ſtriking manner, the great commiſſion of our Lord, Mat. xxviii. 19. which was to teach, baptizing; not teach, and then baptize, as two ſeparate acts; but by teaching in the power and efficacy received from on high, they were to baptize them into the very name, that is the life and power, of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt.—And into this name, life and power, Peter did baptize them: they received it as he ſpake unto them, which exactly anſwered the commiſſion, "teach, baptizing."

No marvel, then, that he immediately remembered Chriſt's promiſe, "ye ſhall be baptized with the Holy Ghoſt"—ſeeing the baptiſmal influences thereof, attendant upon his powerful

ful preaching, were ſo livingly in fulfilment thereof.—Nevertheleſs, as water had been in great eſtimation, it ſeems Peter thought beſt to condeſcend to the weakneſs of thoſe young converts, and of his Jewiſh brethern then preſent, as his Lord and Maſter had again and again graciouſly condeſcended to him in his weakneſs. —So he commanded them to be baptized; and perhaps he could not have done better in their weak ſtate, and eſpecially as none appeared to forbid it, which it is probable he might not know but ſome then preſent might have authority to do; for his mind began now to be conſiderably enlarged; he clearly perceived (which he ſeems not to have known before) that God was no reſpecter of perſons, of Jew more than Gentile, &c. Indeed the very query, "can any man forbid water?" &c. Acts x. 47. is an appeal to men, and beſpeaks a ſtate of heſitation, or uncertainty. Nor is his heſitancy at all to be admired at, things having ſo wonderfully altered in his view in a ſhort time paſt; and the anointing of truth, that brings all things to remembrance, having juſt now revived in his mind the ſweet and precious promiſe of his dear Redeemer—"John indeed baptized with water, but ye ſhall be baptized with the Holy Ghoſt," which he could not but ſee and know, was then, through him, graciouſly taking place upon theſe Gentiles; it is by no means ſtrange that he doubted the propriety of baptizing them in water. It had been much ſtranger, had he not doubted it, eſpecially as water was the very thing which our Lord, in the words now brought to Peter's remembrance, had pointedly oppoſed to his own baptiſm; that, as a thing which had been; his own,

own, as what ſhould be: Peter therefore plainly ſeeing the latter, might well doubt the further uſe of the former, eſpecially among Gentiles, ſeeing its very deſign was that Chriſt might be manifeſt to Iſrael.

Cornelius and his family were not of Iſrael; and if they had been, why continue the ſign in preſence of the ſubſtance, unleſs in condeſcenſion to the weakneſs that could not readily relinquiſh it? It is evident enough that Peter did not think it indiſpenſible, or he would ſcarcely have put the queſtion at all.—There is very little room in propriety to aſk another whether that can be forbidden, which we know ourſelves we are indiſpenſibly enjoined and commanded.—Water baptiſm was not at that time in force; yet Peter might rationally doubt whether it would give ſatisfaction to omit it, and ſo might cautiouſly put the queſtion, to feel out their minds; not really knowing but that ſome one preſent might ſo livingly open its abolition, and ſo ſatisfyingly declare its non-eſſentiality, that all the reſt would have been perfectly ſatisfied with the omiſſion of it.—But none doing this, and it being a new caſe, Peter it ſeems, deſirous of getting through ſafely, and without hurting any tender mind, and knowing that his now commanding it done need not perpetuate it (nor does it, any more than James, directing to anoint the ſick with oil in the name of the Lord, perpetuates that) but that after mature conſideration, and when the ſtate of things would bear it, it might be quite laid aſide, did on this occaſion command it to be done; and it might really be ſafeſt and beſt, at that time, ſo to do; nor was this and the anointing with oil

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the only ceremonies that were ſtill at times condeſcendingly uſed, ſome time after the abrogation of ſigns and figures, as to any further obligation.

A well-timed condeſcenſion to the weakneſs of others, is an excellent thing—but let none now delight to dwell in the weakneſs, and therein weakly conſider the condeſcenſion exerciſed at a time, wherein it was evidently a very nice and difficult point to know how to proceed ſo as to hurt no one, either Jew or Greek; as eſtabliſhing an ordinance of perpetual obligation under the goſpel, that diſpenſation of life and ſubſtance pointed to, by ſuch outward obſervation. For ſo far is that condeſcenſion from affording any juſt pretence for ſuch a concluſion, that we have great reaſon to believe that even Peter himſelf, ſoon after this, became quite clear to omit water baptiſm entirely, as a figurative thing, not belonging to the goſpel; for we do not find he ever afterwards once uſed or ordered it to be adminiſtered to any; but on the contrary, we do find he deſcribes the baptiſm that now ſaves us as quite another thing, and as being effected by the reſurrection of Chriſt the life, to the anſwer of a good conſcience. And indeed it muſt be ſo; for the goſpel of Chriſt is, and in its own pure nature muſt be, void of any mere outward and figurative obſervations—and to hold it forth ſo, in its genuine purity, and ſtripped of all theſe ſigns of both John and Moſes: —we find there was a voice heard out of the cloud, juſt after Peter's propoſal to build three tabernacles, at the time of the transfiguration, Mat. xvii. Mark ix. Luke ix. 28, &c. ſaying, "this is my beloved Son, hear him," 35. A very timely

timely admonition indeed, and ſufficient, one might ſuppoſe, to prevent all who underſtand it from wiſhing to build three tabernacles, or to retain any of the mere ſhadows of either Moſes or John, as circumciſion, the paſſover, or water baptiſm, now, ſince they are all ended, and Chriſt is to be heard in all things.

WHILST the cloud overſhadowed them, they were for three tabernacles (they knew not that Moſes and John muſt not be retained) but when the divine voice brake through the cloud, they had their attention called ſingly to Jeſus. But further, that no confirmation ſhould be wanting, and as it were in order to ſet it home, and ſeal it for ever, that this was the true intent and meaning of this glorious viſion, and of the voice from the excellent glory, we find that immediately upon their hearing ſaid voice, even "ſuddenly when they had looked round about, they ſaw no man any more, ſave Jeſus only, with themſelves."

HERE is the genuine ſimplicity of Chriſt's ſpiritual kingdom and goſpel beautifully and inſtructively diſplayed.—Here thoſe things that were of a nature, and in deſign, to be ſhaken, fulfilled and done away, are removed; and that only which cannot be ſhaken remains. This is ſhaking not the earth only, but alſo heaven; not ſin, and carnality, and earthly-mindedneſs alone; but here a great part of many people's religion, and what they think belongs to the very kingdom of heaven, and goſpel of Jeſus, are ſhaken and removed out of the way; yea, things once of God himſelf ordained, as ſtriking ſhadows of the good things to come, but ever by him deſigned

to

to vaniſh, in the full preſence and enjoyment of the good things themſelves. Bleſſed are they who "have ears to hear," and hearts to underſtand, and faith to follow the Lamb of God whereſoever he leadeth, even to the loſs of all their own buildings, their own righteouſneſs, and creaturely perfomances, till they come to ceaſe from their own works, as God did from his.—Theſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed as Mount Sion, that ſhall never be removed; and being preſerved from ſubjecton to, or from touching, taſting or handling, thoſe outward ordinances, which conſiſt in things that periſh with the uſing, ſhall know the Lord to be one, and his name one; and living and ſerving the one Lord, in the life, love and victory of the ſaints' one true faith, ſhall know aſſuredly that there is but one true goſpel baptiſm, "not the putting away the filth of the fleſh (or outward body, which is the work of outward waſhing) but the anſwer of a good conſcience towards God, by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt."—For theſe ſhall know him to be "the reſurrection and the life" to and in their own ſouls: Chriſt in them the hope of glory, and ſhall have no hope or confidence in any outward ſprinklings or dippings, eatings or drinkings, as pertaining to the work of ſalvation.

The ſubſtantial "anſwer of a good conſcience" is not known without the reſurrection of Chriſt in the ſoul; but this known in fulneſs ever makes "perfect, as pertaining to the conſcience;" which yet cannot be experienced but through the putting off the body of the ſins of the fleſh. "For though the baptiſm that ſaves, is not the putting

putting away the filth of the flesh," that is, the outward filth of the body; yet it ever does put away the sinful filth of the fleshly mind; this is the very work and design of it. Hence its administrator has his fan in his hand, to winnow the chaff from the wheat; his soap, like the fuller, to wash and cleanse away the filth; and his fire, like the refiner, to separate the dross from the gold; yea, purely to purge away all the dross, tin and even reprobate silver, and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire; thus cleansing, and that thoroughly, the very floor of the heart.—This is the baptism that saves, the work of him who saves "his people from their sins," not in them. It is therefore altogether beside the true meaning of Peter's words, "not the putting away the filth of the flesh," to suppose he meant that the saving baptism he there spake of does not cleanse from sin, or put away our sinful filth; but that it is an outward ordinance, which must be submitted to, just to answer a good conscience in that particular respect, without any reliance upon it as to sanctification from sin; which construction I have often known it glossed with, by the pleaders for elementary baptism.

But is it not strange, that men of sense should consent to believe, that the baptism which now saveth us, doth not save us from sin, doth not put away the sinful filth of the flesh? If Peter spake truth when he said "baptism doth also now save us," he must speak of the one saving baptism. There never was but one thing that could save: "according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Where this is livingly witnessed, "the resurrection and the life" of Christ is

always known, and therein "the answer of a good conscience towards God" takes place, to a degree of unspeakable enjoyment; a fulness of divine consolation, unknown in the performance of mere outward ordinances, and never attained to but by being planted in the likeness of Christ's death, buried with him by true Christian baptism into the death of sin, and this death, by the power of the eternal Spirit, arising with him in the power of his resurrection, and walking with him in newness of life.

But to return; as those outward things which had been "imposed until the time of reformation," and were here exhibited, in the transfiguration, as not belonging to the gospel, were not absolutely and entirely out of date till Christ had risen: he so far condescended to their continuance, that he did not forbid and prevent his disciples baptizing his followers in water; for this was a performance at that time in very great vogue, and Christ well knew how to deal with a people habituated to outward observances. It had all along, under the law and prophets, been found extremely difficult to restrain that people from the idolatries of the heathen, even though God had so far accommodated himself or his law to their outward state and disposition, as to provide them with many signs and ceremonies, "divers washings," a worldly sanctuary, &c. Heb. ix. 1.

The mind of man once turned to religious exercises, and pressing on therein, is hard to be properly restrained, is very prone to imagery, idolatry, and a great deal of outward show and activity. And from this ground sprang all pagan idolatry,

idolatry; all advances toward it among the Jews; all continuations of jewiſh, heatheniſh or other mere outward ſigns and ſhadows among Chriſtians, and many abſurd and fooliſh obſervations among Turks and Mahometans. Chriſt knew what was in man, and needed none "to teſtify" unto him "of man," as appears by John ii. 25. And as he had many things to ſay unto his diſciples, which they could not at firſt bear (ſee John xvi. 12) he advanced them gradually, condeſcending to their weakneſs, and attachment to things that belong not to, and can have no place in the pure ſpirituality of his kingdom. This amply accounts for his diſciples continuing to baptize many new diſciples, as they came to believe on him, and follow him, even after he and John had in great degree fulfilled that diſpenſation; a diſpenſation which probably had never been neceſſary, but for the dark and untoward ſtate of the people's minds. And had they all, when Chriſt came, turned their attention rightly to him, and fully underſtood the inward and ſpiritual nature of his goſpel, there would have been very little if any real uſe for baptiſm in water afterwards.

A diſpenſation of ſigns was ever in condeſcenſion to man's weakneſs; and once indulged, they are apt to obtain too great veneration, and be too long retained; for it is ſeldom if ever the caſe, that things highly eſteemed, can be dropt all at once ſuddenly.—It is often ſafer, and better, to lead people along gradually from ſigns to ſubſtance, as they can bear it. Therefore the early followers of the bleſſed Jeſus were tenderly indulged, and all outward things were not at once rent

from them; for though he plainly taught (Luke xvii. 20) that the "kingdom of God cometh not with obſervation," or as in the margin, "with outward ſhow," yet during the twilight of things, or the evening time, wherein, though there was ſome light, yet there was alſo ſome darkneſs; things not being yet wholly clear, nor wholly dark; not yet full and perfect goſpel day, nor altogether night. See Zechar. xiv. 6. 7. He might ſafely, and he did wiſely permit things not properly belonging to his kingdom, but which were to decreaſe, and terminate as the ſun aroſe, and the day advanced in its full clearneſs and perfection. And theſe things, though then only permitted in condeſcenſion, too many very ſincere, but in this reſpect weak Chriſtians, have been gleaning up, from that day to this, inſtead of preſſing into the ſpiritual holy of holies, beyond all vails, ſigns and ſymbols.

They puzzle themſelves with the Apoſtles condeſcending practices, and would erect theſe into goſpel ordinances, though neither Chriſt nor any of his Apoſtles ever enjoined their obſervance as ſuch. Indeed they were ſo far beneath the ſpirituality and pure ſimplicity of the new covenant, which was and is in the heart and inward parts, that the great Mediator thereof never condeſcended, that we have any account of, to baptize one perſon with water; it is on the contrary expreſsly declared, that "Jeſus himſelf baptized not, but his diſciples." Oh! he well knew why he omitted it; for had he done it, it might have induced his moſt enlightened followers to continue it, out of veneration to his example; as many now do from that of his diſciples, though

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he himſelf never once practiſed nor commanded it; and though Paul thanked God he had baptized ſo very few. See 1 Cor. i. 14.

As to its permiſſion during the time after it was in a good degree fulfilled, till Chriſt aroſe from the dead, it might very well be ſuffered in condeſcenſion; for the goſpel day and diſpenſation had not then fully come in: all that ſpace was a time of unfulfilling: many things of an outward typical nature were during that time fulfilled, and very eſpecially that of the paſſover, which Chriſt deſired with great deſire to eat with his diſciples before he ſuffered. See Luke xxii. 15. But why was he ſo earneſt to do it before he ſuffered?—The reaſon of this his earneſt deſire is plain to him "who has ears to hear," to others it may be a myſtery. Chriſt could never do it with propriety, unleſs before he ſuffered; and had he not done it, it would have remained unfulfilled, as to his actual fulfilment, by that ſpecial participation of it. It belonged only to the law; it vaniſhed with Moſes, as water baptiſm did with Elias, that is John; hence it behoved Chriſt, in order to its fulfilment; to eat it before he ſuffered; while things were fulfilling; whilſt the outward and typical things concerning him were having their end (ſee verſe 37 of this ſame chapter) that ſo having done away all theſe things, he might triumph over them, nailing them to his croſs (ſee Col. ii. 14.) and be able on the croſs to ſay as he did, "it is finiſhed," John xix. 30; which he could not have ſaid with equal propriety, had ſo important a type as the paſſover remained unabroliſhed by him; and yet many are ignorantly celebrating the paſſover very frequent-

ly, under an idea that Chriſt, at the very time when he ended it, inſtituted an outward ſupper of perpetual continuance in his church, which could not poſſibly be, conſiſtently with the nature of his kingdom, which is an inward thing; and therefore, when he ſent his diſciples to prepare for him to eat the paſſover, he bid them ſay, "my time is at hand, I will keep the paſſover at thy houſe with my diſciples," Mat. xxvi. 18. He knew the time was at hand for all theſe things to be aboliſhed, and have an end, Luke xxii. 37. He ſteadily calls it the paſſover, and never, I think, once by any other name; and having eaten it with his diſciples, and turned their attention to its myſtical ſignification, to the neceſſity of their eating his ſpiritual fleſh, and drinking his ſpiritual blood, which, that he might take occaſion to do, that they might live by him, was doubtleſs one great cauſe of his anxious deſire to eat it with them, and juſt reminded them, in eating the mere figure, to do it in remembrance of him; he then, as if purpoſely to ſhew them it belonged not to the goſpel, wound up the ceremony, telling them he would not any more eat or drink theſe outward ſymbols, nor partake again with them of the paſſover, till he drank the wine new with them in the kingdom of heaven (ſee Mat. xxvi. 29.) or until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God, Luke xxii. 16; or, as expreſſed verſe 18, "until the kingdom of God ſhall come." This new wine he drank with them eminently in that holy and ſpiritual kingdom, which they lived to ſee come before they taſted of death, according to his promiſe, on the day of Pentecoſt and other bleſſed ſeaſons—continues to drink it new in the ſame glorious

kingdom

kingdom with all that open and let him come in, for he ſups with them, and they with him; and this is the only true celebration of the Lord's ſupper—that which is outward is not (and cannot be) to eat the Lord's ſupper; for that is ſpiritual; no ſuch ſign and ſymbols can now have any proper place in Chriſt's kingdom—but as he is ſubſtantially and experimentally in and with his people to the end of the world, Mat. xxviii. 20; as he does not leave them comfortleſs, but cometh unto them, John xiv. 18; as he and his Father make their real and living abode with them (ſee verſe 23.) ſo he eats and drinks with them in his inviſible kingdom, where they "ſit together in heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus," which can be only in that kingdom. There they ſit under their own vine and fig-tree, where none can make them afraid; See Mic. iv. 4. Theſe eat the fleſh and drink the blood of the Son of God, whereby their ſouls are made alive.

"What is the chaff to the wheat? ſaith the Lord," Jer. xxiii. 28. What is a little bit of outward bread, and a cup of wine, at beſt taken by way of remembrance, to the real ſupper of the Lord, which all the ſaints partake of, and live by? and what if Chriſt did tell his diſciples, as they then ate the outward ſign, to do it in remembrance of him, Luke xxii. 19; and what if Paul told them, as often as they did ſo, they ſhewed the Lord's death till he came," 1 Cor. xi. 26: ſurely that makes no inſtitution of a perpetual outward ordinance in the church of Chriſt. It was a matter of liberty and choice, whether after that once they ate it or not; and that but until the Lord came, according to his promiſe

that he would not leave them comfortleſs, but would come unto them. And ſurely they greatly miſs the true end and deſign of it, who are ſtill in theſe days eating and drinking the outward figure, not diſcerning the Lord's ſpiritual body, nor partaking of that divine fleſh and blood that gives life, nouriſhment and vigour to the ſoul: for if this was their happy experience and enjoyment, in the preſence, company and kingdom of the Lord, with true, living and ſenſible diſcernment of his body, and that ſpiritually broken for them, and of his ſpiritual blood, livingly and life-givingly ſhed for them; why ſhould they be ſtill eating and drinking the old, long-ceaſed ſymbols of it, in remembrance of a preſent Lord and Saviour? Does not this practice beſpeak Chriſt's real abſence to their ſouls, or their non-diſcernment of his ſpiritual body? Let the wiſe in heart among them ponder it well.

But now to return to water baptiſm: I was mentioning that it might be continued till Chriſt's reſurrection, with ſome kind of indulgent propriety—and accordingly we find, that as they came down from the mountain (after the transfiguration) he (Chriſt) charged them that they ſhould tell no man what things they had ſeen, till the Son of Man were riſen from the dead," Mark ix. 9. The viſion looked forward to that time, for the full completion of the things it was deſigned to exhibit—and therefore this very ſilence enjoined on them till that time, is a further and loud confirmation that the foregoing is the genuine import and meaning of the whole viſion; but further they aſked him, ſaying, "why

"why ſay the Scribes that Elias muſt firſt come?" verſe 11. And he anſwered and told them, "Elias verily firſt cometh, and reſtoreth all things," verſe 12: "but I ſay unto you, that Elias is indeed come," verſe 13, or, as Matthew has it, chap. xvii. ver. 12, 13. "but I ſay unto you, that Elias has come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatſoever they liſted: likewiſe ſhall alſo the Son of Man ſuffer of them" —then the diſciples underſtood that he ſpake unto them of John the Baptiſt; thus clear it is that John the Baptiſt was Elias, who had thus appeared and diſappeared in the mount with them: on the whole, it is evident to thoroughly enlightened minds as any doctrine in the goſpel, that neither water baptiſm, eating material bread and wine, nor any other mere outward performance, can poſſibly in the nature of things have any place as ſtanding ordinances in the church and kingdom of Chriſt. Chriſt's coming was deſigned to put an end to all theſe things—and therefore the eating, drinking, waſhing and purification, which remain in the goſpel ſtate, are all inward and ſpiritual, and can be no otherwiſe. The one goſpel baptiſm is not that which puts away the outward filth of the fleſh (which is all that water can do (but it is that which actually ſaves us, and brings to "the anſwer of a good conſcience towards God by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt," 1 Pet. iii. 21.—This no figure could or ever can do though ſuch as continue under the ſigns of former diſpenſations would have us believe, that the Apoſtle here affirms that a figure ſaves us, by the reſurrection of Chriſt; whereas there never was and never can be but one thing that ſaves the ſoul, and that is the inward purifying baptiſm

tiſm of the Holy Ghoſt, as Titus iii. 5, "according to his mercy he ſaved us, by the waſhing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt." Here is ſomething that changes, regenerates and renews the ſoul; well may this be ſaid to be ſaving: and as this "waſhing of water by the word" ſpiritually ſaves the ſoul, how natural is Peter's compariſon of an outward ſalvation, in an outward ark, on the outward water, to this inward ſalvation, by inward and ſpiritual water, in the inward and ſpiritual ark of the everlaſting covenant. See Rev. xi. 19. "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was ſeen in his temple the ark of his teſtament," &c. If Chriſtians would wait to ſee the temple of God thus ſpiritually opened in heaven, they would come to know this ark, and would rejoice in the ſalvation therein experienced; and would know it to be as impoſſible for one ſign or figure to ſave the ſoul as another; that outward water can no more be ſanctified to the waſhing away ſin, than the "blood of bulls and of goats," which the Apoſtle ſays plainly is impoſſible, Heb. x. 4, "for it is not poſſible that the blood of bulls and of goats ſhould take away ſins," and it will forever remain as impoſſible for outward waſhing to do it—and therefore Peter wiſely adds, after mentioning the baptiſm that now ſaves us, "not the putting away the filth of the fleſh;" for he had now learned, whatever he had when he viſited Cornelius, and it is likely he pretty well knew it then, that outward water could not waſh away ſin, nor "make the comers thereunto perfect, as pertaining to the conſcience," any more than the other ſigns and divers waſhings under the

the law; and therefore having mentioned outward water in the preceding verſe, leſt any ſhould ignorantly ſuppoſe he meant outward water, in ſpeaking of the baptiſm which now ſaves us, he carefully and immediately diſtinguiſhes, and declares he did not mean any outward cleanſing, but ſomething which really doth ſave; and he aſſerts it to be "by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt," as that which livingly known in us, "the reſurrection and the life," brings to the comfortable anſwer of a good conſcience; and nothing elſe ever can, for "the law made nothing perfect" as pertaining to the conſcience; for, it having a ſhadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never, with thoſe ſacrifices which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect; for then would they not have ceaſed to be offered, becauſe that the worſhippers once purged, ſhould have had no more conſcience of ſins, Heb. x. 1, 2.

Here we ſee thoſe outward ſacrifices and waſhings, "the ſhadows of good things to come," could never purge the conſcience then; nor can any outward baptiſms, nor all the waters of Jordan, any more do it now; and therefore Peter, ſpeaking of the baptiſm which now ſaves us, brings it home to that which alone can truly purge the conſcience, and "make the comers thereunto perfect;" to wit, the bringing in of a better hope, by the which we draw nigh unto God, Heb. vii. 19. Here we "lay hold upon the hope ſet before us; which hope" (ſays the Apoſtle) "we have as an anchor of the ſoul, both ſure and ſteadfaſt, and which entereth into that within the vail," chap.

chap. vi. 18, 19. This is "Chriſt in us the hope of glory." See Col. i. 27. This is known only where Chriſt is "the reſurrection and the life" experimentally to the ſoul, as before obſerved. Here alone is the anſwer of a good conſcience; hereby indeed "we draw nigh unto God," and this is all within, and is the experience of ſuch only whoſe underſtandings are ſo enlightened, as to "know what is the hope of this calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the ſaints," Eph. i. 18.

CHAP.

## CHAP. III.

*All old things done away in the gospel state. Signs and shadows ceased. Their use was from men's alienation from Christ; the law being added because of transgression. Christ in men, the life of all dispensations. All change in these, but in accommodation to the change in men. Shadows but imposed until the time of reformation. The way into the holiest of all not manifest, whilst the first tabernacle was standing, and the mind resting in outward ordinances. Water baptism was under the first covenant, and* no part *of the second. Hence the least, purely under the second, is greater than John,* as *John the Baptist. As Moses gave place to Joshua, so John to Jesus. Moses entered not into Canaan; nor John,* as the Baptist, *into the purely spiritual kingdom. Signs and figures make none perfect. Hence there is a disannulling of all these for their* weakness. *It is idle to suppose one set of ceremonials abolished, to make way for others as gospel ordinances. Christ commissionates his disciples, at Galilee, to baptize into the very name, the* life *and* power *of* God; *not as a separate act, but by their powerful gospel ministry.* They were to teach baptizingly.

AS I have long seen, with sorrow, how the shadows detain people from the substance, and how hard many strive, even against lively convictions

convictions to the contrary, at times, and greatly to their own loſs, in regard to the true riches, glory and inheritance of and in the ſaints, to make theſe outward things anſwer, as a ſubſtitute, inſtead of inward ſubſtance; I am in earneſt to aſſiſt them, if poſſible, in the neceſſary diſcovery that theſe things have long ago ceaſed, as to their proper uſe; and can have no proper place in the full ſunſhine of the goſpel day. Bear with me, therefore, friendly reader, whilſt I further ſhow how "all old things" (ſigns and ceremonies) "are paſſed away" to all thorough Chriſtians, "all things are" (to theſe) "become new; all things are of God," 2 Cor. xvii. 18.

Now it is clear to me, "all old things" are not paſſed away, in the experience of any who are continuing in the religious uſe of outward bread, wine, water, or any of the old figurative things of the former diſpenſations. The law was added becauſe of tranſgreſſions, till the ſeed ſhould come, Gal. iii. xix. If man had not tranſgreſſed againſt the light of Chriſt, ſhining in the heart, and enlightening "every man that cometh into the world" (John i.) I ſuppoſe no outward written law had ever been neceſſary. Were not the minds of men alienated from the life and government of Chriſt in the ſoul, where the kingdom of heaven is (for Chriſt declares it is within) none of the ſigns, either of John's or the Moſaic diſpenſation, had ever been found needful. Theſe were only as a ſchoolmaſter, to lead the mind back from its wanderings "to Chriſt, who is the ſame yeſterday, to day, and forever;" the change is only in us, and all the change of diſpenſations, from firſt to laſt, is in accommodation and condeſcenſion to the chang-

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ing and changed ſtate of men. Chriſt was "before Abraham," and was and is all the real life, in and under every diſpenſation; and thoſe outward things were only "impoſed on them until the time of reformation" (Heb. ix. 10) until a return to that from which the mind was enſtranged, for in that enſtranged, bewildered and outward literal ſtate of mind, the way into the holieſt of all was not made manifeſt;" for the firſt, the outward "tabernacle, was yet ſtanding," verſe 8; and the mind in this ſtate was ſtill diſpoſed to ſtop and reſt in the outward tabernacle, and in the ſhadow of the firſt covenant, "which had many ordinances of divine ſervice, and a worldly ſanctuary." See verſe 1. Here the outward worſhippers reſted ſecure, although this tabernacle was but "a figure for the time then preſent, in which were offered both gifts and ſacrifices, that could not make him that did the ſervice perfect, as pertaining to the conſcience, which ſtood only (let it be duly noticed) in meats, and drinks, and divers waſhings and carnal ordinances impoſed on them, until the time of reformation," verſe 10. But none of theſe things belong to the goſpel, or times of real reformation, and full return to the life and ſubſtance, which was of old, before ever the outward law was written, amply ſufficient for all that would keep to it. But men departing from this, and rebelling againſt the light, they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof, Job xxiv. 13 And in this alienated and rebellious ſtate "the law entered, that the offence might abound," Rom. v. 20; for God, in gracious condeſcenſion to man thus darkened, and wandering from the ſure guide, was pleaſed to meet him in things more outward, to arreſt his attention,

attention, and make him ſenſible of the offenſiveneſs of his ſtate and condition; that ſo, if it might by any means be effected, he might turn to the Lord, and find him a Saviour. Hence the law entered with many very ſignificant ceremonies and ſervices, pointing out man's need of purification, forgiveneſs, and reſtoration. All this was to ſerve as a "ſchoolmaſter to lead to Chriſt." It not only pointed to him as then yet to come a great way off, or a long time hence; but it pointed to him alſo directly, as then at hand, in and among them, if they would have known and attended to him. For, ſays Moſes (Deut. xxx. 11, &c.) "this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou ſhouldeſt ſay, who ſhall go up for us to heaven, and bring it untous, that we may hearit and do it? neither is it beyond the ſea, that thou ſhouldeſt ſay, who ſhall go over the ſea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? but the word is very nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayeſt do it. And verſe 20, he preſſeth it upon them to love and cleave unto the Lord, aſſuring them thus; "for he is thy life, and the length of thy days."

Thus did Moſes point out the word near and in them, and referred them plainly to the Lord himſelf, as the life to their ſouls. And Paul tells the Romans, x. 8, that this word which Moſes tells Iſrael was near and in them, "is the word of faith, which we preach." And in the preceding verſes expreſsly declares this to be the "righteouſneſs of faith;" and that it ſpeaketh on this wiſe, "ſay not in thine heart, who ſhall aſcend into

into heaven (that is, to bring Chriſt down from above) or who ſhall deſcend into the deep (that is, to bring Chriſt again from the dead,") &c. Hence it is clear, that the life of Chriſt the Lord near them and even in them, was what Moſes meant to point them to, and wiſh them to love and cleave unto, and which was nothing leſs than the true and living word of faith which the Apoſtles preached. This, as before hinted, has been the real life of all diſpenſations; and when and where the true reformation, return, and cleaving unto this, hearing and doing it, take place in purity and fulneſs, " all old things are paſſed away." The ſhadows vaniſh before the light, and the elements melt with the fervent heat of the goſpel ſun.

These things could never have been deſigned for perpetual continuance in the goſpel ſtate, but only to lead unto it. " For if that firſt covenant had been faultleſs, then ſhould no place have been ſought for the ſecond," Heb. viii. 7. John's baptiſm, as well as the paſſover, was under the firſt covenant, and no proper part of the ſecond. Had it been part of the ſecond, how could Chriſt have teſtified, as before noticed, that though among them that are born of women, there hath not riſen a greater than John the Baptiſt, notwithſtanding he that is leaſt in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he? Mat. xi. 11: but the reaſon is now plain, as already evinced, why the leaſt in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he, to wit, that both he, as John the Baptiſt, and his baptiſm, belonged not to the ſecond covenant; and that therefore, as John the Baptiſt, he was but the adminiſtrator of a baptiſm that has no proper place

in Christ's spiritual kingdom, to the least, in the purity of which, "all old things are passed away." This state is evidently greater, as has been observed already, than that of John, as the baptizer in outward water, in which capacity he is here spoken of; and as such he was to decrease, and his baptism to give place to Christ's.

As a saint and servant of God, he was never to decrease, but to "increase with the increase of God;" but his dispensation, his baptism, was ever designed to decrease, and be fulfilled. And I think it will be granted, that the least in the pure kingdom of life and substance is, and must be, in the nature of things, greater than any ever could be in the mere administration of a decreasing and terminating institution.

John was doubtless, as a Christian (and such there have been in all ages, Abraham was eminently one) great in the kingdom of heaven, but this was not as John the Baptist; as such, he came to, but did not enter the kingdom, nor belong to it, he saw it with his eyes, and knew, and pointed to the Lord of it; but as Moses went not over Jordan, though he did much towards leading Israel to their inheritance, but gave place to Joshua, whose name, like that of Jesus, signifies a Saviour, and who conducted them after Moses into the good land; so John the Baptist, as such, could not belong to the purely spiritual kingdom of our Lord; but gave place to him, the anointed Saviour, who baptizeth every member and subject of his church and kingdom, into the very life and power of the kingdom, which "is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in

in the Holy Ghoſt," Rom. xiv. 17. And ſeeing John's baptiſm was no part of the ſecond covenant, but was under the firſt, and its proper uſe was only whilſt the firſt tabernacle was ſtanding, it is equally diſannulled by the aboliſhing of the firſt covenant, and removal of the firſt tabernacle, with the other figurative obſervations; and for the ſame reaſon was this diſannulled, as were the others, viz. its inſufficiency, weakneſs, and utter inability to make perfect the comers thereunto. "For there is verily a diſannulling of the commandment, going before, for the weakneſs and unprofitableneſs thereof. For the law made nothing perfect; but the bringing in of a better hope did, by the which we draw nigh unto God," Heb. vii. 18, 19. Here we ſee that which went before the new covenant ſtate was, for its weakneſs and unprofitableneſs in making perfect, diſannulled; and ſurely John's miniſtration and baptiſm went before that ſtate, and were deſigned expreſsly to prepare for it. I marvel that Chriſtians do not ſee it, and preſs on beyond it. It is idle to ſuppoſe one ſet of ſigns and ceremonies diſannulled for their weakneſs, and another ſet introduced as perpetual ordinances in the goſpel ſtate, we do not read, that, "finding fault" with the rites, figures and ordinances of the firſt covenant; God ordained water-waſhing, and eating and drinking bread and wine, as more permanent and perpetual inſtitutions of the new or ſecond covenant. Nay, verily, he finds fault equally with all things in their own nature equally partaking of the ſame weakneſs; both were of divine inſtitution for a time, and equally weak and liable to a neceſſary abrogation; and being both typical, there was no more perpetual per-

manency in the one than the other; neither in themſelves, nor in their inſtitution; and of the Moſaic inſtitutions, it is expreſsly ſaid, finding fault with them, he ſaith, "behold the days come, ſaith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the houſe of Iſrael, and with the houſe of Judah," Heb. viii. 8. Now what was this new covenant? It was intended to ſupercede and ſupply the defects of the old; but there is not one word of any of thoſe outward ordinances in it.—They are all old things; and however extolled by many good men, belong to the old covenant forever. So that the ceremonials of the law are as much goſpel ordinances as water baptiſm, or bread and wine.

The new covenant is altogether inward and ſpiritual. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the houſe of Iſrael, after thoſe days, ſaith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they ſhall be to me a people," &c. verſe 10. "Chriſt has not entered into the holy places, made with hands, which are the figures of the true," Heb. ix. 24. Nor ought we, if we would become completely his followers, to continue in the figurative waſhings, any more than in the figurative offerings and old ceremonious worſhip of that temple, which was but a figure of the true.—"The prieſthood being changed, there is made of neceſſity a change alſo of the law," vii. 12. It behoved that the baptiſms accompanying the firſt prieſthood, the worldly tabernacle, and holy places made with hands, ſhould, like them, be outward: but now, the law being changed, and the covenant written in the heart, a ſpiritual baptiſm alone can be proper,

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and accordingly is the one only baptiſm of the goſpel, for if it was neceſſary "that the patterns of the heavenly things," theſe being outward, ſhould be figuratively purified with outward ſprinklings, waſhings, &c. ſurely it is as neceſſary that the heavenly things themſelves be purified with better ſacrifices and waſhings than theſe." See Heb. ix. 23. I think if the vail were done away in the experience of Chriſtians, they might in this one text, Heb. x. 5, "when he cometh into the world, he ſaith, ſacrifice and offerings thou wouldeſt not, but a body haſt thou prepared me," read clearly the diſmiſſion of all figurative atonements and purifications; all the ſacrifices and offerings "he taketh away"—as the firſt things, "that he may eſtabliſh the ſecond"—that is, "lo I come to do thy will, O God." This muſt be done in all the ſeed; and this is the thing that remaineth forever, eſtabliſhed under the goſpel.—The ſcope of the Apoſtle's reaſoning in this chapter, againſt the continuation of the "ſhadows of the good things to come," is from their weakneſs, their impropriety and uſeleſſneſs, where the ſubſtance is known, and thus he argues, that where remiſſion of ſins is obtained, there is no more offering for ſin. See verſe 18. Why then continue a baptiſm that was expreſsly unto repentance, for the remiſſion of ſins, if we have obtained remiſſion? Paul brings in the new covenant written in the heart, and the remiſſion of ſins, attending it. "Their ſins and iniquities will I remember no more;" and in the very next words forms the above concluſion. Now where remiſſion of theſe is, there is no more offering for ſin.—And after he gets through with the argument, inſtead of urging any outward bap-

tiſms, or figurative obſervations, he preſſingly enjoins love, good works, holding faſt, not drawing back, not neglecting aſſembling, not to caſt away confidence, patience, &c.—Can any thing be plainer, than that ſuch care and conſtancy in faith, patience, and godly walking, according to the writing of the new covenant, are the weighty matters of the goſpel diſpenſation in Paul's eſtimation? that as he was not ſent to baptize with water, ſo he never in all his writing enjoins it, nor reproves for its omiſſion; he ſpeaks of the believers, not as being then exerciſed in the terrible things at Sinai, but as come to the excellent things of Mount Sion, "the heavenly Jeruſalem, to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect; and to Jeſus the mediator of the new covenant; to the blood of ſprinkling," &c. This is all ſufficient without the figures—and ſo he ſhows the removal of all elſe, "Yet once more I ſhake not the earth only; but alſo heaven"—this is the removal of things that are ſhaken—"that thoſe things which cannot be ſhaken may remain." "Wherefore" (ſays he) "we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may ſerve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." See about the latter half of chapter xii. and xiii. 9. He ſubjoins "be not carried about with divers and ſtrange doctrines; for it is a good thing that the heart be eſtabliſhed with grace; not with meats which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."—Did he not mean theſe elementary things, by the ſtrange doctrines? if not, why does he ſo immediately propoſe grace as the means of eſtabliſhment, and diſcountenance meats as unprofitable? and what means the altar in the next verſe,

verſe, whereof they have no right to eat which ſerve the tabernacle? is not this altar and that which is eaten, by the we, who have it, and have a right to eat of it, ſomething belonging to the kingdom they have received which cannot be ſhaken? and are not the meats, drinkings and waſhings, that are unprofitable, the things that are ſhaken? and why is the ſhaking and removal of theſe, called ſhaking heaven? is it not plainly becauſe theſe are things that had pertained to devotion and religious ſervices, and were yet urged as ſuch by too many? and can any thing remain of a ceremonial nature, where this heaven is thoroughly ſhaken, where all old things are done away, and all things become new, according to the new and living way of the goſpel?—This epiſtle is ſuppoſed to have been written in the year ſixty-four; ſo that there had been a pretty full time of trial what was and what was not profitable to thoſe who had been occupied in them; and we find here many good things inculcated and enjoined; but ceremonials are rejected, as pertaining to the firſt covenant, and as now ſhaken and removed; and is it not truly worthy of remark, that John, the beloved diſciple of our Lord, who is ſuppoſed to have written his hiſtory of Chriſt's life and doctrines many years after his aſcenſion, makes no mention at all of our Saviour's conduct at the eating of the paſſover, in regard to the diſciples eating and drinking in remembrance of him—but relates very circumſtantially his other conduct of waſhing the diſciples feet, and the inſtructive leſſon couched in it?

May we not fairly conclude, that as the only

proper time of the disciples' eating and drinking in remembrance of Christ, was but until his coming again, the Comforter to take up his abode with them, and lead and guide them into all truth; and as this season was long elapsed, when John wrote, that therefore, he thinking it of no use to mention it, passed it in total silence, as one of the many things which Jesus truly did, but which are not noticed in his history? We find him very careful in correcting a hearsay report, which might, if believed, tend to lead people into outward observances, which he appears not to have relied on, nor inculcated in all his writings. The report I allude to is that, by the spreading whereof "the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John" the Baptist. This mistake the beloved disciple, who leaned on Jesus' bosom, and having near access to his heart, knew much of his mind and will, takes special care to rectify, by a full declaration that "Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples." Observing this general omission of things not essential, and his great care to transmit down to posterity many heavenly and truly evangelical and deeply interesting sayings, exhortations and divine intimations of the blessed Jesus; I have been ready to suppose his whole aim, in mentioning water baptism at all, was just to do John the Baptist and the Pharisees justice; properly introduce Jesus as increasing, and John as decreasing; carefully record John's repeated mention of water, as peculiar to his baptism, in direct contradistinction to Christ's; and pointedly to contradict the

the miſtaken opinion, that Chriſt baptized in water.

JOHN knew very well the diſciples did ſo, and doubtleſs knew on what ground it was. Let any one read carefully his evangelical hiſtory and epiſtles, and obſerve his almoſt total ſilence about many things related by others, and how he abounds in the mention of deep ſpiritual matters; and ſee if it does not greatly favour the opinion, that John ſaw the abundant need of preſerving and inculcating things of an inward, living, ſpiritual import and concernment, and divine nature: he aimed at life and ſubſtance, and carefully retained what is moſt livingly expreſſive of it, and what tends moſt immediately to promote the knowledge of it among men. In his epiſtles he dwells almoſt entirely on things really eſſential: he makes the old commandment, the word they had "heard from the beginning"—and the new, "which thing" (ſays he) "is true in him and in you," to centre in the doctrine of the true light that now ſhineth, 1 John ii. 7, 8. And his advices are to faithfulneſs in keeping and abiding in the holy word, to love and good works; but not a word of exhortation to ceremonials.—And may we not fairly conclude, both water baptiſm, and the bread and wine, were much laid aſide, or very little relied upon or inculcated, at the late period at which this beloved diſciple wrote?

CHAP

## CHAP. IV.

*Chriſt's baptiſm is* into *the* name, *i. e. life and* power *of the Godhead. So his commiſſion to his diſciples to adminiſter it, could not be executed but by divine power. They waiting for, received* this, *and baptized others with it. All goſpel preaching is herein, and in its nature is baptizing. Chriſt's baptiſm effects* entire *ſanctification. John's a lively* type *of it, being* all over *in water. It ſhewed the need of cleanſing and remiſſion, but effected neither. Chriſt's alone can. John conſtantly diſtinguiſhes* his *from Chriſt's, by the word* water. *Chriſt baptized none in water, nor ordered it (that appears) but doubtleſs would, had it been his baptiſm. None of the prophecies point him out ſo baptizing, but as effecting inward changes. Diſciples uſe of water no more perpetuates it, than their uſe of circumciſion, anointing with oil, vows, &c. do them. Paul's commiſſion full, yet he thanks God he baptized ſo few. Council at Jeruſalem did not adviſe water, bread or wine.*

LET us now attend more particularly to the great baptiſmal commiſſion, Mat. 28. The 18th verſe introduceth it thus: "and Jeſus came

came and ſpake unto them, ſaying, all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." A very proper introduction to command attention, inſpire confidence, and ſhow them whence their whole qualification to teach baptizingly was to proceed. 19th, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them *eis to onoma*, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt." 20th, "Teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you: and lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Obſerve he ſays, "go ye therefore;" that is, becauſe "I have all power," and can and will qualify you ſo to teach, in my own life and power, as thereby to baptize the people into the very name, the power, virtue and life, of the Divinity. Obſerve further, the commiſſion is not teach, and baptize, as two diſtinct acts; but teach, baptizing. And, as ſuch a work might ſeem almoſt too great for their faith, he adds, that he (who had all power) would be with them in the work, and that to the end of the world.

It is plain that this commiſſion, as it enjoins a very ſpecial kind of teaching, ſuch as ſhould baptize the people into true diſcipleſhip, as members of the body, the church of Chriſt; ſo it could not be executed but by a ſupernatural aſſiſtance received from on high. "Behold" (ſaid Chriſt) "I ſend the promiſe of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jeruſalem, until ye be endued with power from on high," Luke xxiv. 49. John truly baptized with water, but ye ſhall be baptized with the Holy Ghoſt not many days hence," Acts i. v. "Ye ſhall receive power after that

that the Holy Ghoſt is come upon you; and ye ſhall be witneſſes unto me, both in Jeruſalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermoſt part of the earth," verſe 8. Thus evident it is, that their being living witneſſes of Chriſt depended on the power of the Holy Ghoſt coming upon them; and that they could never adminiſter his baptiſm, till they were thereby ſo endued, as to teach, baptizing into the ſame Spirit themſelves were baptized with. This baptiſm into the name, they in due time ſo eminently received, as they waited for it according to direction—" with one accord in one place," Acts ii. 1; that is probably in ſilent retirement, waiting upon God; that in the power thereof they taught with ſuch baptizing efficacy, that multitudes were pricked in their heart, Acts ii. 37. The Holy Ghoſt fell on them which heard the word, chap. x. 44. Their very enemies were not able to reſiſt the wiſdom and the ſpirit by which they ſpake, as chap. vi. 10. Thus truly " with great power gave the Apoſtles witneſs of the reſurrection of the Lord Jeſus," chap. iv. 33. And thus they preached the goſpel unto the people, " with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven," 1 Peter i. 12. No wonder then it fell on thoſe who in true faith, that was of the operation of God, received the word, and gladly embraced the goſpel. Chriſt promiſed, " he that believeth on me, as the ſcripture hath ſaid, out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water; but this ſpake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him ſhould receive," John vii. 38, 39. And what can be more natural than for it to flow into others, as it flows out of them? eſpecially as Chriſt's expreſs direction was, " freely ye have received, freely give."

give." It ſeems the Spirit not only flows into, and continues to flow in the hearts of true believers, but more or leſs flows out of them upon others; for they are, as Chriſt teſtifies, the "light of the world," Mat. v. 14; "the ſalt of the earth," 13; "a city ſet upon an hill," 14, &c. He promiſed to make his diſciples "fiſhers of men."

Some affirm, no man can baptize with the Holy Ghoſt, truly none can, in his own time and ability; nor can any preach the goſpel but by divine aſſiſtance. All true goſpel miniſtry is in the life of the Son of God, and wherever it proves effectual to the converſion of ſouls, it is a baptizing miniſtry. None are fiſhers of men, but who are made ſo by Chriſt: learning and eloquence may amuſe, but it is the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven that makes goſpel preachers. This ſheds itſelf through ſuch, in a bleſſed diffuſion upon others, oft times, in a very lively, inſtructive and ſoul-benefiting manner. And this is a thing as experimentally known, where the real goſpel, which is the power of God unto ſalvation, is preached in the life, evidence and demonſtration of the Spirit, and with power, as any goſpel experience whatever; and it is ſtrange to hear Chriſtians deny it.

Does the preaching of the goſpel in our day ſucceed or not to the real benefit of ſouls? If not, it is uſeleſs. If it does, what cauſes the benefit? Is it of God, or of man? Art thou ſo vain, oh! man, as to think thou canſt do any ſpiritual good of thyſelf, unaſſiſted by the Spirit of Chriſt? If this is thy idea, thou art no true goſpel

goſpel miniſter; for they know they can do nothing of themſelves.—If thou art ſenſible of the help, life and aſſiſtance of the holy Spirit in thy miniſtry, and of a divine and beneficial influence on the minds of thoſe who partake of it, thou mayſt reſt aſſured, that ſo far as it is truly ſo, it is through the operation of the Holy Ghoſt on their hearts; and whatever be the degree of this, more or leſs, thy miniſtry is ſo far, and no further, a baptizing miniſtry: ſo far, and no further, it is truly the miniſtry of the goſpel. And it is thus, and only thus, that it pleaſeth "God, through the fooliſhneſs of preaching, to ſave them that believe," 1 Cor. i. 21.—It is very unlikely that any ſhould be ſaved through preaching, unleſs thereby baptized with the one ſaving baptiſm, for nothing elſe ever can ſave. Hence, clear it is, that through true goſpel preaching, this baptiſm is adminiſtered to them that believe; the word preached being mixed with faith in them that hear it. And no miniſtry that is not in its own nature, life and influence, baptizing, is in any degree the genuine miniſtry of the goſpel.—But, thanks be unto God, there is yet preſerved a living, powerful and heart-baptizing miniſtry; and many are the living witneſſes of it, and of its bleſſed effects; and I am well confirmed, that no rightly qualified goſpel miniſter can doubt of the baptizing influence of right miniſtry. He who knows Chriſt, living, acting and ſpeaking in him, knows that which alone baptizes with the Holy Ghoſt and with fire. "I in them, and thou in me," ſays Chriſt to his Father, John xvii. 23. And many other texts declare Chriſt in us; and true and bleſſed experience indubitably confirms it. What then can

be

be too hard for his miniſters, in and under his influence? Paul ſays, "I can do all things through Chriſt, which ſtrengtheneth me," Phil. iv. 13. But Chriſt himſelf puts the matter beyond all reaſonable diſpute, John xiv. 12; and he aſſerts it with "a verily, verily, I ſay unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do ſhall he do; and greater works than theſe ſhall he do; becauſe I go to my Father." Hence Paul ſays, "I have begotten you, through the goſpel," 1 Cor. iv. 15; and ſpeaks of imparting ſpiritual gifts, Rom. i. 11. Hence, on the laying on of the Apoſtles hands, "the Holy Ghoſt was given," Acts viii. 18. Hence, as Peter began to ſpeak to the houſhold of Cornelius, the Holy Ghoſt fell on them. And hence Chriſt ſays (in conſideration that it was he who ſpake in his diſciples, and his Father in him, and ſo in them) "he that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that ſent me," Mat. x. 40. On this ground Paul calls himſelf "the miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt to the Gentiles; miniſtering the goſpel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being ſanctified by the Holy Ghoſt," Rom. xv. 16. And verſe 18 he adds, "for I will not dare to ſpeak of any of theſe things, which Chriſt hath not wrought by me." Well then might he ſpeak of miniſtering the goſpel, which is the power of God; ſeeing it was all the work of Chriſt by him, and reſulted in ſanctification, by the Holy Ghoſt, the baptizing power of the goſpel. Indeed the very deſign of the goſpel miniſtry is to open people's eyes, and to turn them from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God," Acts xxvi. 18.

This miniſtry lays the axe to the root of the corrupt trees in men's hearts, and therein is executing the very work of Chriſt. It is truly Chriſt that does the work; but he works much by inſtruments: John was a great inſtrument in his hand: his miniſtry was very uſeful in helping to kindle that fire which was to burn up the chaff. He powerfully taught the neceſſity of this fiery baptiſm, and of renouncing all dependence on being Abraham's children. This was a good beginning, and was a very neceſſary preparation for Chriſt, who had afterwards ſtill further, and preſſingly too, to combat and alarm that diſpoſition, perhaps as prevalent now as at that day; and that among too many profeſſing Chriſtians, may I not ſay, of all denominations? I belong to this or that reformed and truly religious ſociety; we are in the true faith and practice of the Apoſtles. Here thouſands ſtick in a lifeleſs profeſſion, as to themſelves; and yet imagine themſelves the true ſeed and offspring of Abraham, ſpiritually. And it is very hard removing them from their ſtrong holds, or making them ſenſible of the need of the axe and the fire. John's miniſtry was to ſuch, doubtleſs, truly awakening. And then, as already obſerved, his dipping them, not partly, but all over in water, was a lively and very ſtriking repreſentation of the baptiſm whereby Chriſt thoroughly cleanſeth the floor of the heart. And to point out this, and to enkindle a deſire to experience it, was all that outward dipping could do, ſave to waſh away the outward filth of the fleſh. It could do nothing in itſelf towards real remiſſion of ſins; that is the work of Chriſt, and the ſoul is brought to experience it through his baptiſm. Hence John was very careful to prevent the

the idea of his own baptiſm being ſaving. He never once ſpeaks of it, that I recollect, but he adds the word water, to turn the mind from reſting in it, as a thing in any wiſe profitable, further than as it repreſented a perfect cleanſing and purification by Chriſt's, and engaged them to preſs after it. I indeed baptize you with water, but Chriſt ſhall baptize you with the Holy Ghoſt and fire, and thereby cleanſe you thoroughly within, as I waſh, or dip you all over outwardly, is the import of John's teſtimony. And three times, in eight verſes, ſpeaking of his own baptiſm, he every time carefully adds the word water, in contradiſtinction to Chriſt's. Firſt, being examined why he baptized, if he was not Chriſt, Elias, nor that prophet; it ſeems he thought it apology enough to tell them, John i. 26, "I baptize with water;" and refer them to Chriſt for goſpel baptiſm, that is of the Holy Ghoſt. For outward water being no part of Chriſt's baptiſm, but being long before then in ſome ſort practiſed among the Jews, it was no intruſion into Chriſt's office for John to baptize with it. So that this ſhort anſwer of John, that he only baptized with water (an old practice) an outward, and comparatively a low thing, entirely different from Chriſt's baptiſm, and no part of it, was amply ſufficient to exculpate John from any juſt imputation of meddling with things too high for him, or belonging to another. But further to evince how careful John was to keep up the diſtinction that forever exiſts, in the very ground and nature of them, between his baptiſm and Chriſt's—we find that in the 31ſt verſe he again dwells on or repeats this important diſtinction, by the word water, "that he ſhould be made manifeſt to

Iſrael, therefore am I come baptizing with water" —and no further on than the next verſe but one, the 33d, he again holds up the ſame diſtinction; "he that ſent me to baptize with water, the ſame ſaid unto me, upon whom thou ſhalt ſee the Spirit deſcending and remaining on him, the ſame is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghoſt."— One would think this three-fold teſtimony, all in ſo ſhort a time, might ſatisfy every ſober mind that water baptiſm, and that of Chriſt, are entirely two diſtinct and ſeparate things; and more eſpecially, as touching water, it is very particularly recorded that Jeſus himſelf baptized not. He might and did, with a great deal of wiſdom and condeſcending goodneſs, as noted before; allow his diſciples to do it, in that weak and early ſtate and ſtage of things, before all the ſhadows could well be laid aſide, their minds not being then able to bear it: "I have yet many things to ſay unto you, but ye cannot bear them now," John xvi. 12. And as the diſciples did, through this all-wiſe permiſſion, baptize conſiderable numbers, and that upon their faith in and following Jeſus, and becoming his diſciples, it was but natural for the people to conſider it as if Chriſt had done it himſelf. Nor is it at all ſtrange therefore that "the phariſees had heard that Jeſus made and baptized more diſciples than John (though Jeſus himſelf baptized not, but his diſciples") John iv. 1, 2. And as what a man does by others, he is often called the doer of; ſo the people then (ſuppoſing the diſciples baptized by Chriſt's authority and commiſſion, becauſe they were his diſciples and followers whom they ſo baptized) ſaid he baptized; but it is clear enough that he only ſuffered it, and that in condeſcenſion; nor do I believe it would

would ever have been ſo carefully recorded that he himſelf baptized not, had outward water been any part of his baptiſm; but his baptiſm being quite another thing, he ſaw it proper wholly to avoid adminiſtering outward water as an ordinance; and that probably leſt it ſhould countenance an idea that it belonged to his goſpel and kingdom; and ſo ſtrengthen the already too ſtrong attachment of the people to things outward; and to prevent this in after times, it was alſo proper, that it ſhould be expreſsly recorded that "Jeſus himſelf baptized not;" and in confirmation of theſe ſentiments it may be obſerved, that he never once on any occaſion enjoined it on any to baptize, or be baptized, in water—we read particularly what he did, and what he ordered done, on divers particular occaſions.—Many believed on him, many he healed, and caſt out devils; but never a word that he either baptized any of theſe, or ordered them baptized, in water.—We read expreſsly, that he directed one to go and offer for his cleanſing "the gift that Moſes commanded, for a teſtimony unto them," Mat. viii. 4. Another he ordered to "go waſh in the pool of Siloam," John ix. 7: but not an inſtance of any one ordered by him to be baptized by another in water. But had water baptiſm been his, or any part of his goſpel, it would have been a ſtrange thing indeed had he never vouchſafed once to adminiſter it, nor order it done on any of the multitudes that believed on him, or out of whom he caſt devils, or whom he healed. And even this omiſſion alone, it prevailing throughout the whole hiſtory of his life, both before and after his reſurrection, were in my view ſufficient to overthrow the notion

notion of water baptiſm being a goſpel ordinance.

What! appoint a ſolemn ordinance, even a ſacrament (as ſome call it) of perpetual obligation in the church, and never once deign to adminiſter it, or order it adminiſtered to any individual, among all the thouſands who became his diſciples? This were ſtrange indeed; and to me is quite incredible, and inadmiſſible. Indeed among all the very pointed and remarkable prophecies concerning Chriſt, there is not one in all the Old Teſtament that points him out as the adminiſtrator of water baptiſm, or as eſtabliſhing a church or kingdom accompanied with any ſuch outward ordinances. The Father, by Iſaiah, ſpeaks of him as the Lord's Elect, in whom his ſoul delighteth; declaring, Iſ. xlii. 1, "I have put my Spirit upon him"—giving him "for a covenant to the people, for a light to the Gentiles, to open blind eyes, to bring out the priſoners, and them that ſit in darkneſs," &c. and further, "behold the former things are come to paſs, and new things do I declare; before they ſpring forth, I tell you of them." But not a word, among all theſe new things, of his baptizing in outward water. His work was to bring forth judgment unto truth, enlighten the Gentiles, bring out of priſon and darkneſs, "bring the blind by a way they knew not," an inward ſpiritual way; not the way of ſigns, ſhadows, and outward ordinances—theſe were the old things; "I will lead them in paths that they have not known." Theſe are inward.

Again, Iſ. lii. 13, "Behold my ſervant ſhall deal prudently," &c.—15. "ſo ſhall he ſprinkle many

many nations," &c. He was indeed more truly wiſe and prudent, than to practiſe or eſteem outward ſprinkling or dipping as a goſpel ordinance; his is a ſpiritual ſprinkling, as explained Ez. xxxvi. 25, "then will I ſprinkle clean water upon you, and ye ſhall be clean." The 26th and 27th verſes promiſe a new heart, and new ſpirit—the Lord's Spirit put within them. Such things as theſe did the prophets foretel—but not once in all their predictions, of return, reformation, reſtoration, and building the waſte places, and the like, do they ever mention or hint at Chriſt's baptizing with water, or eſtabliſhing any ſuch kind of ſhadowy inſtitutions in his glorious goſpel church. Nor did Chriſt, when he came, ever once, that we read of, call that of water his baptiſm. Indeed it is never once ſo called in all the Bible, that I can find. And, moreover, I do not find that Chriſt ever called it by any other name than John's baptiſm. And is it not wonderful, that he ſhould conſtantly, and as often as he ſpake of water baptiſm, call it John's, if it was as truly his own, as John's? Or how can we ſuppoſe he ordained it as a ſtanding ordinance in his church, and yet never mentioned it once as ſuch?—Why ſhould he leave his followers, to the world's end, under the great difficulties and diſadvantages of ſuch a total ſilence, if he willed them to uſe it as his baptiſm? Was Moſes more faithful in his houſe, than Chriſt in his? Moſes was very particular in deſcribing the rituals of the law, even to very minute circumſtances: and would Chriſt ordain a perpetual inſtitution, and never once call it his own, but always call it John's? He knew very well that both himſelf, John, and others, called and underſtood water baptiſm to

be John's. He alſo knew his own was repeatedly placed in direct contradiſtinction to it—and ſaid to be with the Holy Ghoſt. So that in commiſſionating his diſciples to adminiſter his own baptiſm, there was no need to deſcribe it over again; for it had been ſo often expreſsly defined, and diſtinguiſhed from that of water, that he might well ſuppoſe no real diſciple of his need be at a loſs to know what he meant by the word baptizing in his great goſpel commiſſion—and eſpecially after having ſo abundantly, and on ſo many occaſions, taught them the inward and ſpiritual nature of his kingdom, and ſo repeatedly turned their minds from outward obſervations, to inward realities.

But had he inſtituted water baptiſm, after all this, as a goſpel ordinance, it would have been highly requiſite for him to have expreſſed it to be water, in the moſt particular manner—much more ſo than if his baptiſm had never been named as different from water. He might well know his followers would be apt to conclude he inſtituted his own baptiſm, and not one which had ſo repeatedly been expreſsly diſtinguiſhed therefrom. He might well know that thoſe whoſe minds were, at leaſt in degree, opened by his repeated endeavours to turn them from things outward to things inward, from ſigns to ſubſtance, would not be unlikely to underſtand his words to mean ſpiritually; inſtead of turning back, to ſuppoſe him now at laſt bringing them in bondage to weak and beggarly elements. He had comforted their ſorrowful ſouls with a promiſe of coming again to them in ſpirit, and taking up his abode with them, and thus remaining with them to the end of the world.—Almoſt every thing

thing he had ſaid to them, for ſome time paſt, had tended directly and indeed been by him deſigned, to lead inward, and to a ſpiritual diſcerning and underſtanding of things; ſo that had he now, juſt before he left them, turned back, and in direct contradiction to the very nature of his goſpel and kingdom, and to the whole ſcope and tenor of his own excellent parables and diſcourſes, inſtituted an outward baptiſm or ſupper, it might ſurely be expected he would have told them expreſsly what he intended—nor can I ſuppoſe he would by any means have omitted it.—I am ſo well aſſured of the ſpirituality of the goſpel, and of Chriſt's doctrines and diſcourſes, that I cannot entertain the leaſt idea, but that had he eſtabliſhed outward ſigns, he would have very explicitly declared them to be outward.—Others may think otherwiſe. But though I have great charity and good-will for many who adhere to thoſe ſigns, I cannot but think, that where they come to have a full view of the purity of the goſpel ſtate, and a clear underſtanding of the drift and deſign of Chriſt's many hints, intimations, and heavenly communications to his diſciples, they muſt ſee the total abolition of all the mere rituals, both of John and of Moſes.

It is often urged, that Chriſt's diſciples baptized in water. I conceive this no more perpetuates water baptiſm, than their circumciſing, purifying, ſhaving, vows, anointing the ſick with oil, abſtaining from blood, and from things ſtrangled, perpetuate theſe things in the church. —Theſe two laſt were expreſsly enjoined by the elders, even upon the Gentiles, and that after deliberate conſideration and debate, at the time

of the great Council at Jeruſalem, Acts 15, though at the ſame time, through aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt, they decreed againſt circumciſing the Gentiles, and conſidered circumciſion as an uneaſy yoke; yet in the beginning of the very next chapter, we read that Paul, though he and Timothy had theſe very decrees to deliver, to be kept as they paſſed through the cities, even at ſuch a juncture as this, he acted ſo greatly in condeſcenſion to the weakneſs of the Jews, that he circumciſed Timothy, becauſe of them; and after he had paſſed on, and they had delivered ſaid decrees, on his return again to Jeruſalem, all the elders, with James (who had pointedly decided againſt circumciſion in regard to the Gentiles) told Paul that many thouſands of the Jews believed; that they were zealous of circumciſion and the law of Moſes, and adviſed him to purify himſelf, and be at charges, &c. with four men that had a vow; that ſo thoſe over-zealous Jews might ſee he kept the law, and walked orderly, Acts, xxi. 20—24.—And yet in the next verſe they ſay, "as touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they obſerve no ſuch thing," &c. So we read, ver. 26, "then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himſelf with them, entered into the temple, to ſignify the accompliſhment of the days of purification, until that an offering ſhould be offered for every one of them." So very great was the condeſcenſion of the primitive Apoſtles and elders to the weak ſtate of the people in thoſe early times.—To the weak, Paul ſays he became weak, yea that he was made all things to all men, that he might ſave ſome, 1 Cor. ix. 22; and this he expreſsly declares he did for the goſpel ſake,

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verſe 23.—Yea further he ſays expreſsly, he caught them with guile, 2 Cor. xii. 16. This kind of condeſcending guile they doubtleſs thought neceſſary in thoſe times of weakneſs and zeal for ordinances.—Paul's knowledge of Chriſt was by revelation, and ſo he ſaw clearly beyond thoſe outſide things, and knew that neither they, nor water baptiſm, could poſſibly belong to the goſpel. Hence, though on the ſame principle of condeſcenſion he baptized a few, he thanked God it was ſo very few; and declared he was not ſent commiſſioned to do it, 1 Cor. i. 17. Had he not known it was not Chriſt's baptiſm, nor within the great commiſſion, he would not have dared to affront his Lord, by thanking him that he had ſo almoſt totally neglected his great goſpel ordinance.—Paul's commiſſion to the Gentiles, Acts xxvi. 18, is expreſsly "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveneſs of ſins, and inheritance among them which are ſanctified, by faith that is in me." This is as full, and contains the very ſum and eſſence of the general commiſſion, Mat. xxviii. 19, &c. and Mark xvi. only that it ſeems confined to the Gentiles.

The general commiſſion is, to teach all nations, baptizing them into the name, &c. and declares that he that believeth, and is ſo baptized, ſhall be ſaved.—Paul's commiſſion is to open the eyes of the Gentiles, and turn them from darkneſs to the light, and from the power of Satan to God. And if any can doubt whether this is the ſame baptizing miniſtry of the goſpel, mentioned in the more general commiſſion, let the concluding words of Paul's commiſſion be duly weighed, "that

" that they may receive forgiveneſs of ſins, and inheritance among them which are ſanctified, by faith that is in me."—Here they were not only to receive forgiveneſs of ſins, but the ſame inheritance with all the other ſanctified, and that through the ſame faith; for thus believing, they were baptized through the powerful miniſtry of the Apoſtle, which was in the evidence and demonſtration of the Spirit, &c. into the life, power and virtue of the ſame eternal name: they were turned truly unto God; and thus truly believing, and being livingly and ſanctifyingly baptized into the ſame holy name, and into the ſame heavenly inheritance, and therein abiding, the promiſe that they ſhall be ſaved, was equally in force to them, as to others ſo believing and being ſo baptized: that if there is any eſſential difference in theſe two commiſſions, as to what was to be done by thoſe ſent forth in the execution of them, I have not yet diſcovered it, except in Paul's limitation to the Gentiles; and I have not the leaſt doubt but that Paul did, in the execution of this commiſſion, as truly baptize into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt, as ever an Apoſtle of Chriſt did, under the general commiſſion; yea, did adminiſter the very ſame baptiſm therein enjoined, that is Chriſt's, and not John's. I am full in the faith, that Paul well knew the general commiſſion contained no precept for water baptiſm. He knew too well the nature and ſpirituality of Chriſt's kingdom, to ſuppoſe it did—and therefore doing what he did, at baptizing with water, in mere condeſcenſion, he might as well, when he ſaw the abuſe made of it, thank God that he had done no more—as he might that he had circumciſed no more; for as neither circumciſion

ciſion nor uncircumciſion, ſimply, is any thing in this kingdom; ſo neither is baptiſm nor non-baptiſm in water, ſimply, any thing at all therein—but the new creature: and this is all in all in this ſpiritual kingdom.

Some may think I make very bold with goſpel ordinances, as they call them; but though I feel tenderneſs towards many who think them ſuch, I am at no loſs in pronouncing them no real parts of the goſpel. And if they had been, why did not the great Council at Jeruſalem, when it ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt and to them to lay upon the Gentiles no greater burthen than the few things they then named, mention water baptiſm, and the bread and wine, as things neceſſary to be punctually obſerved? Paul was in that Council: and he knew water baptiſm was deſigned that Chriſt "might be made manifeſt to Iſrael"—and did not wiſh the Gentiles burthened with it, any more than with circumciſion. He and others, as occaſion might ſeem to require, in becoming all things to all men, in thoſe early times of weakneſs and miſguided zeal for externals, might condeſcend to baptize either a Jew or a Gentile: but neither the one nor the other could any more be brought under this ſign, as a goſpel ordinance, than under the many ſigns and ſymbols of the Moſaic law. I could go through every inſtance recorded in ſcripture, where it was uſed by the Apoſtles, and I think clearly evince, that in no one caſe it was uſed as ſtrictly pertaining to the kingdom of the Meſſiah, nor under or according to his great goſpel commiſſion: but ſo much of this kind has been done by others, as, Dell, Barclay, Penn, Pike, Claridge, Forſter, Phipps, Fothergill, &c. that I think it not neceſſary to be

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ſo particular; firmly believing, that when men lay aſide all preconceived opinions, and look fully and fairly into the nature and deſign of the goſpel, in the true light and life of it, they muſt unavoidably ſee all theſe "old things done away;" and perceive how earneſt Paul in particular was, to prevent the believers from degenerating into an attachment to and reliance on things outward. Read the whole epiſtle to the Galatians; it abounds with his care on this account. And if we go to the bottom of things, we ſhall find the ſame need of preſſing forward to the diſuſe of water baptiſm, as of other ceremonials. It is as mere a ceremony, as merely figurative, as was circumciſion, or any of the divers waſhings; has no more in its nature or effects to ſupport its continuance; and is no more perpetuated among the precepts and injunctions of Jeſus.

CHAP.

## CHAP. V.

*Remarks on ſeveral paſſages in "A plain Account of the Ordinance of Baptiſm" (as the author calls it.) He is or was a ſenſible writer; but ſtriving to unite old ſhadows with the goſpel, he, like all who attempt it, blunders. Chriſt takes the lambs in his boſom, and bears with much weakneſs. The vail is done away in Chriſt. He is the end of all things. His are not ſubject to ordinances, in things that periſh with the uſing. If all waited God's ſending, water baptiſm, &c. would ceaſe, and preaching would all be in baptizing efficacy. The non-experience of this, a cauſe of doubt in many, whether goſpel miniſtry is baptizing. Chriſt's miniſters not always ready, but miniſter the Spirit to others, as it is given them. The words "into the name of the Father," &c. not a form to uſe in ſo low an act as that of water baptiſm. Hence never once ſo uſed by the Primitives; but doubtleſs would have been, had water been the baptiſm of the commiſſion. Peter's commanding baptiſm at Cornelius', no more perpetuates it, than Paul's baptizing Criſpus and Gaius, though not ſent to do it; nor any more than the uſe of circumciſion, purifying, anointing with oil, &c. perpetuate them. The name, is the virtue, power, &c. Chriſt Lord of the Sabbath-day —and of all figurative inſtitutions made under the law, to redeem thoſe under it. Then John was under it, ſo his baptiſm ended. It was in ſome ſort*

*fort uſed under the law, long before John. Old rituals not to be incorporated into Chriſt's pure religion and worſhip. His talk with the woman of Samaria, and with John's diſciples, import this. His faſt is inward.*

IT is remarkable how ſtrongly the advocates for dipping or plunging inſiſt, in their arguings againſt the Pædo Baptiſts, or ſuch as ſprinkle infants, upon a plain, full and expreſs command. This I think they pretty generally maintain to be neceſſary. The author of "A plain account of the ordinance of baptiſm," as he calls it, and who ſeems to be as ſenſible a writer as almoſt any I have read in defence of water baptiſm by immerſion, maintains theſe propoſitions, page 4, Boſton edition.

"I. THE receiving of baptiſm is not a duty of itſelf, or a duty apparent to us from the nature of things; but a duty, made ſuch to Chriſtians by the poſitive inſtitution of Jeſus Chriſt.

"II. ALL poſitive duties, or duties made ſuch by inſtitution alone, depend entirely upon the will and declaration of the perſon who inſtitutes or ordains them, with reſpect to the real deſign and end of them; and conſequently to the due manner of performing them.

"III. IT is plain, therefore, that the nature, the deſign, and the due manner of receiving baptiſm, muſt of neceſſity depend upon what Jeſus Chriſt, who inſtituted it, hath declared about it."

ON

On which I would remark, that if the nature, end and design, with the due manner of administring and receiving Christ's baptism, must depend entirely upon what he himself hath declared about it, I think it is plain, that the nature of it is altogether inward and spiritual. He never once calls outward baptism with water his; never once declares any such thing about his, as that elementary water or any other outward thing belongs to it; but distinguishing his own from that of water, says plainly, "John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost." Acts i. 5.

And as to the manner of its administration, he has not declared one word about its being by dipping in outward water. On the contrary, what he does expressly declare, as to its administration by his apostles, shews it to be by and through the efficacy of their powerful gospel ministry. They were to teach, baptizing: and that not into water; but "into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." And even this very author, in reciting this passage, this great commission both affirms it to be "the first account of baptism as a Christian institution: and renders it "into the name," &c. p. 39. Now if, as he asserts, this is "the first account of baptism as a Christian institution," and if this is so very different from that which was in water, that it is into the eternal name, how could he add water to this institution, and yet repeatedly maintain the absolute necessity of a plain and express declaration from Christ himself, both as to the nature, end and design, and also the due manner of performing and receiving Christian baptism?

baptiſm? This he urges again and again. See page 45. "It cannot be doubted Jeſus Chriſt ſufficiently declared to his firſt and immediate followers, the whole of what he deſigned ſhould be underſtood by or implied in this duty; for this being a poſitive inſtitution, depending entirely upon his will, and not deſigned to contain any thing in it but what he himſelf ſhould pleaſe to affix to it, it muſt follow, that he declared his mind about it fully and plainly; becauſe, otherwiſe, he muſt be ſuppoſed to inſtitute a duty of which no one could have any notion without his inſtitution, and at the ſame time not to inſtruct his followers ſufficiently what that duty was to be." If this is good reaſoning againſt ſprinkling infants, why not as good againſt dipping adults in material water, ſince Chriſt never once mentions either as belonging to his baptiſm? And yet this ſenſible author will not allow any thing at all in it, or to be underſtood, or even implied in it, but what Chriſt fully and plainly declared his mind about: and then queries, "Where has Jeſus Chriſt declared his mind, and declared it fully and plainly, that infants are to receive Chriſtian baptiſm?" Now, ſerious reader, let us juſt vary the terms of this queſtion, and aſk, "Where has Jeſus Chriſt declared his mind fully and plainly—nay, where has he declared it at all, that adults are to be baptized in water? or where has he ever declared material water to pertain to his baptiſm?" I believe the text where he has declared this is not in the Bible, any more than the other; and alſo that dipping adults outwardly, is no more the baptiſm Chriſt ordained, than ſprinkling infants; and that the foregoing reaſoning

ſoning is as ſubſtantially concluſive in one caſe, as the other.

But he goes on, and aſks, "Is not our Saviour's commiſſion far from declaring fully and plainly in favour of children's baptiſm, perfectly ſilent on this head?" And I aſk, is it not as perfectly ſilent about water? But he further aſks, "does it ſay any more than this, make diſciples, converts, believers, amongſt all nations, and baptize them?" Here I anſwer, yes; it is not only perfectly ſilent as to water, as not at all intended therein; it expreſsly enjoins into what they are to be baptized, the name of the Father, &c. But had it ſaid no more than make diſciples, baptizing them, he who preſumes to add water, adds that which Chriſt has no where enjoined; but has emphatically diſtinguiſhed from his baptiſm. And he who ſeparates baptizing from teaching, in this commiſſion, and repreſents the baptiſm here enjoined, as enjoined to be otherwiſe adminiſtered than by the baptizing miniſtry of the goſpel, puts aſunder what Chriſt here plainly joined together.

Page 41, 42, he ſays, "When therefore our bleſſed Saviour, after his reſurrection, inſtituted his ſacrament of baptiſm, if infants were to be received to it, it cannot be doubted that he himſelf ſufficiently declared this to his firſt and immediate followers, which ſufficient and only authentic declaration muſt appear in ſome paſſage of the New Teſtament. "There ſeems" (ſays he) "the greateſt reaſon to expect ſome expreſs declaration on this head, becauſe otherwiſe men who had hitherto been uſed to exclude infants, and to look upon them no way concerned in the ordinance of baptiſm, would be likely ſtill to

paſs them by, and not think of them as coming within the reach of their freſh commiſſion. Men who, during John's miniſtry, had already baptized an infinite multitude of the adult only amongſt the Jews, would naturally conclude, on their being ſent forth to practiſe the ſame rite among the Gentiles, that with them alſo the adult only were proper ſubjects, unleſs there appeared ſomething upon the face of their commiſſion to teach them otherwiſe." Now does not this hold altogether as forcibly againſt immerſion in water? let us read the argument thus: when our Saviour, after his reſurrection, commiſſionated his diſciples to adminiſter his one ſaving baptiſm, if outward water belonged to it, it cannot be doubted that he himſelf ſufficiently declared this to his firſt and immediate followers; which ſufficient and only authentic declaration muſt appear in ſome paſſage of the New Teſtament. There ſeems the greateſt reaſon to expect ſome expreſs declaration on this head; becauſe, otherwiſe, men who had hitherto been uſed to hear water baptiſm called John's, and pointedly diſtinguiſhed from Chriſt's, and Chriſt's expreſsly declared to be quite another thing, the Holy Ghoſt and fire, in which it were very abſurd to ſuppoſe material water to have any part, might be very likely ſtill to reject water, as not at all within the meaning of a commiſſion confined wholly to the one ſaving baptiſm and miniſtry of the goſpel, which was to continue to the end of the world, and which could not be adminiſtered without the immediate preſence and help of Chriſt in ſpirit; and therefore required their waiting at Jeruſalem, till they were "endued with power from on high," before they could execute the commiſſion.

Men who, during John's miniſtry, had baptized many of the Jews into his watery baptiſm, and had conſidered it only as his, and as preparing the way for Chriſt's, might very naturally, on being ſent to baptize the Gentiles with Chriſt's baptiſm, and for qualification, promiſed his divine preſence or the enduement of "power from on high," conclude that water baptiſm was ſtill but John's, and required no more power from above to adminiſter it now than before; but that Chriſt's, being, as they had ever been taught, entirely a different baptiſm, required quite different qualifications to adminiſter it; and which, accordingly, they were promiſed to receive, and directed to wait for, before they went forth, or indeed could poſſibly go forth, in this commiſſion. All this, the very nature of Chriſt's baptiſm, the manner and terms of the commiſſion, and the qualifications expreſsly pointed out therein, as neceſſary to its execution, might naturally lead them to conclude, unleſs there had alſo ſomething appeared upon the face of their commiſſion to teach them otherwiſe, and turn their minds from Chriſt's to John's baptiſm; which yet, in itſelf, were, in ſuch a commiſſion, unaccountably abſurd. But prejudice has ſuch a powerful influence, that many texts are read and quoted in ſupport of elementary water, which ſpeak only of the ſpiritual water of the word. I even admire at the miſapplication of a conſiderable number, in this way, by the author now mentioned; and perhaps I may, before I have done, point ſome of them out; though I aim not at controverſy, but the advancement of all, beyond ſigns and ſhadows, to the life and ſubſtance. And this I think will be the caſe with ſuch as

fully adhere to the beſt part of the ſentiments contained in their beſt writings; as for inſtance, the foregoing in the preſent author's account.

And again, p. 46. "A limited commiſſion amounts to a prohibition of the things not therein contained." This he doubtleſs thought, and doubtleſs many of his readers ſtill think it concluſive againſt infant ſprinkling. I think it as much ſo againſt outward immerſion. The commiſſion is as much limited in one caſe as the other, and as much "amounts to a prohibition." Let then this ſentiment be admitted in its full force and latitude, and it will lead to the unſhadowy diſpenſation of goſpel realities, to the baptiſm that now ſaves us. But inſtead of this, too many are acting, as he ſays the Romaniſt does, about infallibility, p. 71. "Thus" (ſays he) "the Romaniſt, in an affair whoſe nature admits of none but poſitive evidence, endeavours to make up the want of it by inference, and reaſoning from fitneſs. Such an inſtitution there was under the Old Teſtament, therefore it remains under the New." And do not both Pædo and Antipædo-Baptiſts endeavour to make out water to Chriſt's baptiſm, which is wholly wanting in the words of his commiſſion, and wholly repugnant to the nature and deſign of his baptiſm, by inference? And is it not urged upon us by them, from what was under a former diſpenſation too, and that a decreaſing one, and deſigned to terminate, and be fulfilled in Chriſt?—whoſe goſpel and baptiſm is the power of God unto ſalvation to true believers?—p. 61, he ſpeaks of ſureties for infants, as entirely a ſupplement.—I ſay the ſame of water.—It is entirely a ſupplement,

ment, that men ſtrive hard to add to the goſpel. —But in the matter of an inſtituted duty, he maintains "no one can be a judge but the inſtitutor himſelf of what he deſigned ſhould be contained in it, and becauſe, ſuppoſing him not to have ſpoken his mind plainly about it, it is impoſſible that any other perſon (to whom the inſtitutor himſelf never revealed his deſign) ſhould make up that defect: all that is added, therefore (ſays he) "to Chriſt's inſtitution as a neceſſary part of it, ought to be eſteemed only as the invention of thoſe who add it: and the more there is added (let it be done with never ſo much ſolemnity, and never ſo great pretences to authority) the leſs there is remaining of the ſimplicity of the inſtitution, as Chriſt himſelf left it." p. 61.

What pity it is, reader, that men who can argue ſo cloſely againſt human inferences, additions, ſupplements and inventions, do not ſo feel the force of their own arguments, as to leave all additions, and come home to the naked ſimplicity of Chriſt's inſtitutions, as he himſelf has left them to us.—But he goes on ſaying, "I am the more ſolicitous to obſerve this, and to impreſs it upon the minds of Chriſtians, becauſe it is the only thing that can either prevent or cure the miſtakes of many ſincere Chriſtians upon this ſubject*." He ſays, p. 54. "the people called

* And yet, after all his ſolicitude to obſerve and impreſs theſe ſentiments, he has himſelf, throughout his performance, miſtakenly kept up, and endeavoured to maintain, the addition and ſupplement of an outward ſign (for he repeatedly calls it a ſign himſelf) to the inſtitution of an important and ſoul-ſaving ordinance of the goſpel. So hard is it either to prevent or cure the miſtakes of many ſincere Chriſtians upon this ſubject.

Quakers are of opinion, that the baptiſm of the ſpirit is the alone Chriſtian baptiſm, and the baptiſm of water belonged only to the diſpenſation of John. But in the caſe of Cornelius we have an inſtance under the Chriſtian diſpenſation, and upon the call of the Gentiles to the faith of the goſpel, wherein it appears the Apoſtle Peter is ſo far from concluding the baptiſm of the ſpirit, renders that of water unneceſſary, that he infers directly the contrary, viz. no man ought to be againſt their baptiſm in water, becauſe they had, previouſly, received the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt. Then baptiſm with the Holy Ghoſt was the proof and reaſon of their right to the baptiſm of water."

This argument ſhould be well examined; no doubt it weighs much with many, and ſeems to them unanſwerable: but to me there is ſomething in it which tends directly to the confirmation of the Quaker's doctrine, and the overthrow of his own. The Quaker ſays, "the baptiſm of the ſpirit is the alone Chriſtian baptiſm, and the baptiſm of water belonged only to the diſpenſation of John." But this author, throughout his "plain account," inſiſts on immerſion in water, as the baptiſm of Chriſt. Now there is but "one Lord, one faith, and one baptiſm," belonging to the Chriſtian diſpenſation—but here this author, three times, mentions expreſsly both the baptiſm of the Spirit, or Holy Ghoſt, and the baptiſm of water, as diſtinct things, as two baptiſms, and urges them being both uſed in the caſe of Cornelius, as proof that water baptiſm belongs to the goſpel.—Will he ſay, Chriſt inſtituted two baptiſms? if not, as here were two mentioned, it is plain

plain one only of them was Chriſt's. If Chriſt's is but one, and that one be that of the Holy Ghoſt, then that with water is not Chriſt's, but, as the Quaker ſays, was John's. On the other hand, if Chriſt's is but one, and that one be immerſion in elementary water, then that of the Holy Ghoſt is not Chriſt's.—So that this inſtance, inſtead of proving water baptiſm to be Chriſt's, proves the quite contrary; and powerfully confirms the Quakers' doctrine, that it was only John's, and was continued through condeſcenſion to the weakneſs of many in that early ſtate of things in the Chriſtian church. And as it was adminiſtered to ſome before, and to others after they received Chriſt's baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt, I think nothing can be gathered from this inſtance in ſupport of the right, the divine right, as he elſewhere calls it, of outward immerſion under the goſpel, unleſs it be granted that ſuch as received immerſion before the baptiſm of the ſpirit, had no right to it; the which to grant, is at once giving up ſeveral of the ſuppoſed ſtrong holds in favour of water.

Indeed whoever attempts to prove ſigns and ſhadows part of the goſpel, will ever meet with inſurmountable difficulties: hence we find many attendant on every attempt (however ingeniouſly executed) to dignify water baptiſm to the degree of an ordinance with Jeſus.—But when we once come to the genuine ſimplicity of the goſpel, theſe difficulties vaniſh; and nothing ſeems more natural and eaſy, nothing more conſonant to plain ſcripture, and the neceſſity of occaſions, than theſe frequent condeſcenſions, in times of weakneſs, and therein thoſe diverſe continuations of things,

in point of obligation, ceaſed, which are recorded in the New Teſtament.—Indeedt his very condeſcenſion is one eminent diſplay both of the wiſdom and compaſſionate goodneſs of our Saviour. —It exhibits him equal to all ſtates and conditions, "touched with a feeling of our infirmities," commiſerating our weakneſs, taking the lambs in his boſom, and "gently leading thoſe that are with young;" feeding them with food they could bear, milk before ſtrong meat; and indulging them with ſigns, till they could ſee the all-ſufficiency of the ſubſtance, to which all the ſigns pointed—"there is a time to every purpoſe;"—and, ſays Chriſt, if I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how ſhall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" John iii. 12. He knew what was in man, knew all his attachments and weakneſſes, and graciouſly ſtooped to the loweſt, darkeſt and moſt literal ſtate of ſincere ſeekers; waiting patiently their gradual advancement to a ſtate of pure ſpiritual worſhip, void of "all old things," of every ſign and ſymbol.—And I have a full perſuaſion and belief, that ſuch is his condeſcending goodneſs and forbearance, in our days, towards great numbers of ſincere-hearted diſciples, who are ſtill, even in reading the New Teſtament, ſo far under the vail as not to perceive the abolition of certain ceremonials, which never did, and in the nature of things never could belong to the goſpel: and the travail and prayer of my ſoul is, that they may not, as too many certainly and ſorrowfully do to their great hindrance in the true Chriſtian progreſs, ſettle down, and ſtick in theſe things; but may paſs forward into the myſtery of Chriſt, till they experience the vail entirely done away in him.—

The

The vail is done away in Chriſt.—This is the joyful experience of ſuch as are livingly in him the life, the ſubſtance, the Lord from heaven, the quickening ſpirit, the light of men, and inward hope of glory: but a mere profeſſion of Chriſt can never do away the vail.—"The covering is ſpread over the face of all nations"—and is as thick, and dark over the minds of nominal Chriſtians, yea, thouſands who are high in profeſſion of Chriſt, and zealous in exterior performances, as it is over any perſons whatever, or ever was over the Jews in reading Moſes.—And though the God of all grace is pleaſed to permit many upright hearted men and women to remain ſo under the vail as ſtill to uſe and plead for theſe exteriors; yea, ſome who are in a degree preachers of the goſpel; yet, bleſſed be his holy name, he is not without, but has raiſed up and preſerved many living witneſſes, from time to time, to the pure ſpirituality of his goſpel kingdom, who are truly of the inward heart, "circumciſion, which worſhip God in the ſpirit, and rejoice in Chriſt Jeſus, and have no confidence in the fleſh," Phil. iii. 3. Theſe dare not confide in touch, taſte, handle, or become ſubject to ordinances, in theſe things, which periſh with the uſing. Col. ii. 20, 21, 22.

Many ſuch there are, even in our day, who can truly "thank God" that he has ſhewn them clearly the emptineſs and abrogation of all theſe things, and can truly declare, with Paul, touching water baptiſm, that "God ſent them not to baptize, but to preach the goſpel." And it is believed, that if the preachers of our day were all to wait till God ſent them to baptize in water, or

not

not to run without his commiſſion and ſending, we ſhould ſoon ſee a total ceſſation of the practice, and no real loſs to Chriſtianity neither.—Indeed, if they were all to wait his ſending, before and until they commence preachers, there would doubtleſs be abundantly leſs of that teaching which is not baptizing. And is it not highly probable, that one great reaſon why many, under ſuch teaching, cannot believe the goſpel miniſtry is truly according to the goſpel commiſſion, "teach, baptizing,"—in their non-experience of the power and efficacy of the pure living miniſtry of the goſpel, which is always in the power of God, and is more or leſs to the ſalvation of them that believe? But where there is a living miniſtry in purity preſerved, and where the living word, thus livingly preached, is mixed with true faith (which is ever of the operation of God) in them that hear it; theſe can ſet to their ſeal, that ſuch do really "miniſter to them the ſpirit." See Gal. iii. 5. "he therefore that miniſtereth to you the ſpirit." Here "the excellency of the power is of God," even though we have this treaſure in earthen veſſels, 2 Cor. iv. 7.—Though it is men, that out of this good treaſure of the heart bring forth excellent things, "miniſter the ſpirit," impart ſpiritual gifts, and actually baptize into the life and ſpirit, name and power, of the Father, &c.—yea, beget ſouls to God; as Paul ſays, "I have begotten you through the goſpel," 1 Cor. iv. 15.; yet the inſtruments have no ſufficiency of themſelves;—their "ſufficiency is of God," who maketh them able miniſters of the New Teſtament, "not of the letter, but of the ſpirit," 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6.—Hence Paul ſaid, he would "know not the ſpeech of them which are puffed up,

up, but the power. For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." 1 Cor. iv. 19, 20. Were all to keep ſtrictly to this life and power of the kingdom, theſe ſigns would ceaſe for ever; and we ſhould have no other miniſtry, but the pure baptizing miniſtry of the goſpel. And here ariſeth the neceſſity of waiting upon the Lord, for the renewal of ſtrength, and qualification for all goſpel miniſtry; that ſo the power may indeed be of God; as the apoſtles waited to be "endued with power from on high."—And thoſe who ſo wait, and dare not run of themſelves, or preach in their own time, or at one time, becauſe they have at another, they follow the great ſhepherd, learn his experience, and are led in his footſteps:—their hour is not always;—it frequently is not yet come, as was the caſe with him: but great is their advantage, by this experience and limitation; for when it does come, it comes with power; and they know the life and meaning of Chriſt's words, John xx. 21. "as my Father hath ſent me, even ſo ſend I you." And ſurely he was ſent of the Father, to baptize with the Holy Ghoſt, and did do it, and that even in preaching the goſpel to the meek. And as he was anointed for this ſervice by the Spirit of the Lord, that was upon him, as before noticed, in order that his miniſters might be qualified for the like ſervice, and be ſent in like manner as he was; immediately "when he had ſaid this, he breathed on them, and ſaith unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghoſt," ver. 22.; and thus qualified by the ſame anointing, and ſent forth in the ſame ſervice, they were enabled to work the ſame works, according to his promiſe, John xiv. 12, "verily, verily" (mark the certainty

tainty of it) " I ſay unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do, ſhall he do alſo; and greater works than theſe ſhall he do; becauſe I go unto my Father."—But why becauſe he went to the Father? becauſe he would then pray the Father, and the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, ſhould be ſent to abide with them for ever, to lead and guide them into all truth, and qualify them to work the works of God.

PAUL exhorts Timothy, " that good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghoſt, which dwelleth in us," 2 Tim. i. 14. And was not this good thing truly, as Paul calls it, " the gift of God?" and yet was it not in Timothy by the putting on of Paul's hands? 2 Tim. i. 6. Thus we ſee, as in other inſtances, " through laying on of the Apoſtles hands the Holy Ghoſt was given," Acts viii. 18. and why not as eaſily by their preaching? It is evident, that it was given by their preaching, which was in the divine power, as well as by the laying on of hands, in the ſame power, and that too in this very inſtance, the caſe of Timothy; for ſays Paul to him, " neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the Preſbytery," 1 Tim. iv. 14.

HERE Paul declares this gift of God was given by prophecy, as well as by laying on hands. And what is prophecy? It is preaching the goſpel; for " he that prophecieth" (ſays Paul) " ſpeaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation and comfort," 1 Cor. xiv. 3. Great edification and comfort indeed attend ſuch truly goſpel prophecying and teaching, when thereby he that thus

ſpeaketh

ſpeaketh unto men, " miniſtereth unto them the ſpirit," the gift of God, that is thus given to them, as a good thing indeed, and which, after they have received it, they cannot keep it, " but by the Holy Ghoſt that is in them."—It is the ſpirit that firſt quickeneth; and as theſe quickenings are attended to, an increaſing with the increaſe of God is happily experienced; even "grace, for" (the faithful improvement of) " grace." And after all improvements and communications of grace, or the Holy Ghoſt, it is ſtill this alone that can enable us to keep this precious treaſure, which we have thus graciouſly received from God; being given to us, of him, in our earthen veſſels. It is neither ſpeaking, nor laying on of hands, in a formal manner, that can convey divine influence to the ſoul, or qualify for divine ſervice. The power is only of God; and he that is not immediately impowered of God, has nothing more to do, either with preaching or laying on hands, than Simon the ſorcerer, who would have bought with money the privilege of communicating the Holy Ghoſt, that he might trade with it, as I conclude, and make money by the buſineſs.

It is probable the ſign of laying on of hands was, in that weak and early ſtate of the church, or of many young converts, made uſe of as a confirmation, thereby ſtrengthening their faith in the truth of the goſpel, and in the power attending the apoſtles; but is neither needful where the goſpel is generally eſtabliſhed, nor, out of the life, any more availing than the brazen ſerpent was to Iſrael, after its real uſe was ceaſed, and they were become enſnared by an idolatrous attachment

tachment to it, and dependence on it. The minds of men, not ſingle to divine light, are ever liable to miſtake the real uſe and deſign of ſuch things; to continue them out of all proper ſeaſon, and rely too much upon them. Hence the continuation of water baptiſm, bread and wine, laying on of hands, &c. among Chriſtians, even to this day, as of Iſrael's lifeleſs looking to that mere piece of braſs, for ſeveral hundred years, formerly, and long after its real uſe was over, and when no good was derived from their formal looking to it.

Ananias was ſent to Paul expreſsly, Acts ix. 17, that he might "be filled with the Holy Ghoſt." Then ſurely he inſtrumentally diſpenſed or miniſtered it to him, or (which is the ſame thing) baptized him with it.

Some contend againſt baptizing ſpiritually by teaching in the power of the goſpel, and urge that the gift of tongues always attended the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt. If ſo, who have this baptiſm in our day? Will it be granted that none are now baptized with the baptiſm of Chriſt? Then the ſaints now receive none but John's. But there are divers inſtances in the New Teſtament of perſons baptized with the Holy Ghoſt, where not a word is ſaid of their ſpeaking with tongues, as the attentive reader may ſee for himſelf.

Peter, in relating his viſit to Cornelius, mentions the angel's ſaying to him, to wit, that he (Peter) ſhould tell him words whereby he and his houſe ſhould be ſaved. This ſhews his words would

would be with baptizing efficacy; that he would, as he certainly did, baptize them with the Holy Ghoſt: he taught baptizingly, according to commiſſion; and he himſelf evidently conſiders that baptiſm with the Holy Ghoſt, which they received through his teaching, as an exact accompliſhment both of this ſaying of the angel, and of our Lord's promiſe in regard to the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt. Do, kind reader, examine the paſſage for thyſelf, Acts xi. where the angel, ſpeaking of Peter, ſays to Cornelius, verſe 14, "who ſhall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy houſe ſhall be ſaved." In the very next ſentence, to ſhew how exactly this was verified, Peter ſays, verſe 15. "and as I began to ſpeak, the Holy Ghoſt fell on them, as on us at the beginning." Here he plainly connects their reception of the Holy Ghoſt, through his miniſtry, with the ſaying of the angel, that he ſhould tell them words, by which they ſhould be ſaved. Indeed, how could he poſſibly tell them words by which they ſhould be ſaved, unleſs baptizing influence attended his words? Nothing ever ſaves the ſoul, without the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt. Had I heard the angel tell Cornelius, that Peter would tell him words by which he ſhould be ſaved, I think it would to me have been ſufficient evidence that Peter's words ſhould be with baptizing power. And this I think might be depended on; ſeeing nothing ſaves ſhort of "the waſhing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt." And on this ground we might take it for certain, from this ſaying of the angel, that Peter's powerful teaching was to prove baptizing to Cornelius and his houſhold, whether Chriſt had ever verbally commiſſionated him and the

the other apoſtles to teach baptizingly or not; and whether Peter had ever related that he did ſo or not. But ſeeing Chriſt did ſo commiſſionate them, and ſeeing the angel did declare, that Peter ſhould deliver words by which men ſhould be ſaved; and ſeeing none can be ſaved without the one only ſaving and ſpiritual baptiſm; and ſeeing they received this, as Peter began to ſpeak, the Holy Ghoſt then falling on them; and ſeeing Peter himſelf evidently conſidered its ſo falling on them as the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt; and immediately, in the very next words, applied our Lord's promiſe to what then took place, through his miniſtry, ſaying, verſe 16. "then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he ſaid, John indeed baptized with water; but ye ſhall be baptized with the Holy Ghoſt:" I think all theſe facts and conſiderations, taken together, amount to a very full and ſtrong confirmation, that the miniſtry of the goſpel is a baptizing miniſtry, and that men did inſtrumentally baptize with the Holy Ghoſt. And this will aſſuredly be the caſe, as long as Chriſt continues to be with his miniſters, and they thereby continue to preach the goſpel, as it was preached in the primitive times, "with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven." And this (it is the unſhaken faith of ſome) will be the caſe "even unto the end of the world. Amen."

This account of Peter's, reſpecting the baptiſm of Cornelius and his family with the Holy Ghoſt, through his miniſtry, is ſo connected and expreſſed by him, as to confirm his meaning, where, afterwards, he ſpeaks of the baptiſm which now ſaves us, to be, that this ſaving baptiſm is the

the ſame by which Cornelius and his houſe were baptized, while he was delivering thoſe words, by which the angel had ſaid they ſhould be ſaved. Peter knew no figure could ſave, any more than the "blood of bulls and of goats" could "take away ſins;" and therefore, in telling what is the baptiſm which ſaves (which is ſeveral times already remarked) he alſo carefully ſhews us what it is not, leſt his mention of the word water ſhould draw ſuch as were too outward in their views to truſt in or continue the uſe of that which only puts away the outward filth of the fleſh, or of the body. And his commanding Cornelius and his houſe to be baptized, no more proves he had a commiſſion to baptize with water, than Paul's baptizing Criſpus and Gaius proves he had a commiſſion for it, which he declares he had not; nor yet a whit more than his circumciſing Timothy, and purifying in the temple, and James' directing the ſick to be anointed with oil in the name of the Lord, proves a divine commiſſion for all theſe things. Had Paul given a circumſtantial relation of his baptizing the few he did baptize in water, without mentioning that he was not ſent to do it, or thanking God that he did it in ſo few inſtances, it had been as ſtrong in favour of the practice, as any inſtances of its adminiſtration by the reſt of the apoſtles. This he might have done, as well as others, though he was not ſent to adminiſter that baptiſm. And do not all ſee it would in reality have been no true ſupport of the practice? Yet how eagerly would it have been claimed, as a ſupport thereof, juſt as are the inſtances where others uſed it.

Now let us ſuppoſe they had all teſtified (and I can ſee no reaſon why they might not, as truly as Paul) that Chriſt ſent them not ſo to baptize; that they did it in condeſcenſion, and thanked God that they did it no more; what then would become of all thoſe inſtances, now ſo confidently urged as proof that a mere figurative immerſion is the ſaving baptiſm of Jeſus? They did divers things without commiſſion, and yet do not expreſsly declare they were not ſent to do them. Does their omiſſion of ſuch a declaration infer they had a commiſſion? By no means. Neither does their not declaring they were not ſent to adminiſter elementary baptiſm, infer they had a commiſſion for that. But, ſay many, Chriſt gave them a commiſſion to baptize. Very true: and the minds of men looking outward for the meaning and accompliſhment of many things that are inward and ſpiritual, has induced them miſtakenly, among other inſtances, to underſtand a commiſſion expreſsly to baptize into the eternal name, as meaning into water; and thus to retain, as a goſpel ordinance, a mere figurative, preparatory, decreaſing and terminating inſtitution. Some think it muſt have been by divine commiſſion that the apoſtles baptized in water, becauſe it was in the name of the Lord. But we ſee the anointing of the ſick with oil, was alſo in the name of the Lord. And yet I know of none who now hold to a divine commiſſion for this practice. But we may take notice, that neither this, nor water baptiſm, "was into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt." No, there is not one inſtance of this form of words in all the Bible, in the uſe of water, which ſurely we may conclude

conclude would have been the caſe, had the commiſſion deſigned an outward dipping; for, in that caſe, that muſt have been the ordained form of words; but as water was not meant, the commiſſion contains no form of words at all to be uſed in baptiſm; but the words into the name, &c. expreſs the very nature, power, and divine efficacy of the baptiſm they were to adminiſter. It was not their own, it was not John's, it was not water, it was not any thing that they could adminiſter at any other time, than when ſpecially "endued with power from on high;" and therefore this they were to wait for, and were promiſed to receive, as their qualification, from him who has all power.

Now he who had all power, was "Lord even of the Sabbath day," Mat. xii. 8. and juſt as much Lord of every other ſign, and has equally fulfilled them all, and redeemed his people from every yoke of mere ceremonial obſervations;—for he was made of a woman, "made under the law, to redeem thoſe that were under the law," Gal. iv. 4.—And if Chriſt was made under the law, ſurely John was alſo under it, as I have before advanced; nor was it ever totally aboliſhed, even as a law of carnal or outward ordinances, till Chriſt roſe from the dead.—And this holds good inwardly with the true Chriſtian traveller in his own experience—"he that hath an ear, let him hear."

But as John was under the law (though advanced near to the kingdom) Chriſt has, in redeeming his people from all ceremonials of the law, alſo redeemed them from water baptiſm,

which indeed was frequently in ſome ſort practiſed under the law, long before John; as appears by the very precepts of the law—and which is allowed by the author of the "plain account" before mentioned; for ſpeaking of baptiſm in the days of the apoſtles, he ſays, "the principal ſcene of baptiſm lay in a country where immerſion was quite familiar, and muſt, by the very laws of their religion, come into daily uſe through all parts of the land," p. 29. Baptiſm in water being therefore a ceremonial of the law, was, though differently uſed by John, completely ended, with every other ceremony thereof, when Jeſus roſe triumphant from the grave, led captivity captive, and gave ſpiritual gifts unto men. And when he riſes ſo in us, and completely puts all things under him, in our ſouls, we ſhall all find there are no ſigns or ſymbols in the goſpel, as ſtanding ordinances thereof.—John's uſing water baptiſm a little differently from what had been uſual before, made no difference as to its perpetuity, though that difference might have taught the Jews, had their ears been open enough to have heard it aright, that he who was coming after him would make great alterations, and remove thoſe things that could be ſhaken, that thoſe only which could not be ſhaken might remain.—There is abundant evidence in ſcripture, that Chriſt never intended to incorporate any of the old rituals into his pure religion and worſhip. —Thus he taught the woman of Samaria, at the well, that the true worſhip was inward, "in ſpirit and in truth,"—and turned her mind from outward water to the inward, John iv. And when John's diſciples came to him, ſaying, "why do we and the phariſees faſt oft, but thy diſciples faſt not?"

not?" Mat. ix. 14. he firſt ſhows the time of mourning is not while the bridegroom's comforting preſence is enjoyed; but that, when he was taken from them, then they would faſt: which ſhows the faſt he meant was inward.—And, in the next place, to ſhow the impropriety of uniting the ceremonials of the law, as outward faſts, waſhings, &c. with the goſpel, the life, the ſubſtance—he tells them, "no man putteth a piece of new cloth into an old garment," &c. "neither do men put new wine into old bottles," &c. plainly inculcating, that his goſpel was the new and living way—his new cloth, the robe of pure righteouſneſs—the garment of ſalvation; his new wine, the wine he drinks new with his choſen, in his Father's inward and ſpiritual kingdom—and therefore is put only into the new bottles, the hearts of the ſanctified; that ſo their hearts might be animated, and rejoice in his ſalvation, out of all formality and ritual obſervances; for that he was not come, with his new wine, to ſupply the old bottles of law ceremonies, or animate therewith the vaniſhing diſpenſation of types and ſhadows,—nor with his new cloth, to patch up the old garment of thoſe "carnal ordinances," impoſed on them until the time of reformation, Heb. ix. 10. which was only "a figure for the time then preſent," v. 9. Nay, verily, this was not his intention;—not the deſign of the Father in ſending him—he came to aboliſh all theſe, and ſo to bring in everlaſting righteouſneſs; and which, wherever it is completely brought in, entirely ſupercedes the neceſſity of all theſe outward ordinances, and aboliſhes them forever.

It is further obſervable, that Chriſt's directions about faſting, point plainly to that which is inward, and wherein thoſe who faſt according to them "appear not unto men to faſt," Mat. vi. 18. Indeed, it being his peculiar office to fulfil and aboliſh the ceremonial obſervances, I believe we ſhall find, by a careful and illuminated peruſal of all his parables and diſcourſes, that he never on any occaſion expreſſed any thing for the perpetuation of outward ſigns, but, on the contrary, very repeatedly, and on almoſt every occaſion that furniſhed proper opportunity, pointed out, though often times very obſcurely, at leaſt to this world's wiſdom, the unceremonious and purely ſpiritual nature of his kingdom.—But theſe are things which "the vulture's eye" (though very prying) "hath not ſeen," Job xxviii. 7. They are only "ſpiritually diſcerned." The natural man (with all his talk of Chriſt and goſpel ordinances) cannot know them. See 1 Cor. ii. 14.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VI.

*All baptized with Christ's baptism are members of his church, and none else. Six queries; which, rightly answered, will determine which is Christ's baptism. Divers other queries. Paul's care to avoid running in vain; hence he omits open proclamation against circumcision, at Jerusalem, though he had preached against it among Gentiles. Not strange, then, John's baptism was still in vogue. The* TWELVE *baptized only by John, in water. They could administer John's, without the power they were to wait for to administer Christ's. Putting on Christ in baptism, is putting on the armour of light. The word for* teach *in the commission, not the common word* didasko, *but* matheteuo, *to disciple, instruct* into *the kingdom of heaven. Sprinklers and dippers both greatly err about Israel's baptism in the cloud and sea. It supports neither. "Plain account" corrected in this respect. The author of it allows the disciples the use of water baptism, during Christ's ministry on earth, was the same as John's. It is the soul needs purgation. Water cannot do it. Diverse texts shewing plainly the* name *is often used for the life, presence, power of the Lord.*

THERE is a baptism by which every member is initiated into the body of Christ. As sure as any are thus baptized, they are mem-

bers of Chriſt.—If any are not thus baptized, they are not of Chriſt's church.

Now, Query 1. What is the baptiſm, without which none can be members of Chriſt's church—and which none can be baptized with, but they immediately become members?

Query 2. Are all ſure to be members of Chriſt's true church, who are baptized in water?

Query 3. Has Chriſt two baptiſms? See Eph. iv. 5. "one Lord, one faith, and one baptiſm." No more two goſpel baptiſms than two Lords, and two faiths.

Query 4. Does not Paul plainly ſay, "by one ſpirit we are all baptized into one body—and have been all made to drink into one ſpirit?" 1 Cor. xii. 13.

Query 5. Can any other but this, which baptizeth into the one body of Chriſt, be the one initiatory and ſaving baptiſm of Chriſt?

Query 6. Can that be the one baptiſm of Chriſt, which thouſands may be baptized with, and yet not become members of his true church, but remain in the gall of bitterneſs, and bond of iniquity?

I think theſe ſix queries, rightly anſwered, will determine which is the one initiatory and ſaving baptiſm of Chriſt in the goſpel. Is it not ſtrange that men do not ſee it?—Why do they ſtick in the practices of the Apoſtles ſo rigidly, in

in regard to John's baptiſm and the ſupper, and ſo eaſily get over divers other of their practices? —Would it not have been a ſtrange and almoſt unheard of thing, had thoſe famous inſtitutions dropt into diſuſe all of a ſudden?—Could it poſſibly have been borne?—Do we not always find it much eaſier to bring people by degrees to reject old venerated laws and cuſtoms, and adopt new ones, than to ruſh on and enforce them all at once?—Is not God a God of condeſcenſion and tenderneſs? Did he not anciently lead his people Iſrael, after he brought them out of Egypt, purpoſely a different way from the neareſt, leſt they ſhould meet with diſcouragements, and return back to Egypt? Exod. xiii. 17. Would he not at leaſt allow his Apoſtles to exerciſe condeſcenſion, and go in and out before the primitive believers, as they could bear it?—Was not this evidently the caſe on divers other occaſions?—Did not Paul, in communicating to the brethren at Jeruſalem how it was that he preached the goſpel among the Gentiles, to wit, void of ceremonies, and without circumciſion, do it privately, to ſuch only as were grown in the truth, and able to ſee the propriety of it, and to underſtand that the goſpel has no ſuch outward obſervations? Gal. ii. 2.—Does he not ſay, that this his care to avoid a general communication to all was, "leſt he ſhould run, or had run in vain?" Might it not have been wholly in vain for Paul to attempt benefiting the believers that were of the circumciſion at Jeruſalem, if he had bluntly at firſt declared off hand, that circumciſion was aboliſhed? And was not this about the year of our Lord fifty-two, and about the ſeventeenth year of Paul's apoſtleſhip?

Is it ſtrange, then, that he had to circumciſe Timothy, purify in the temple, &c. on account of the wrong zeal and attachments of the Jews, ſeeing ſo late in the day circumciſion ſo far maintained its ground, that he had probably run in vain, if he had not avoided an open declaration of its being no goſpel ordinance?—And is it any ſtranger, that John's baptiſm ſhould be in too high eſtimation to be eaſily laid aſide at once? Is water baptiſm once called Chriſt's in all the Bible? Is it once called a goſpel ordinance? Did Chriſt ever practiſe it? Was John's baptiſm Chriſt's? If not, were Chriſt's twelve diſciples ever baptized with Chriſt's baptiſm, or not? If Chriſt's is water, and yet not the ſame of John's, who baptized theſe Apoſtles, ſeeing Jeſus baptized none in water? And we never read of the Apoſtles being baptized therein by any but John. I have often mentioned, that the deſign of water baptiſm was, that Chriſt and his baptiſm might be made manifeſt to Iſrael: and as this was fully done to the Apoſtles, as to his outward coming, they needed no more water baptiſm; and it ſeems pretty evident they had no more than was adminiſtered to them by John.—But if the commiſſion, Mat. xxviii. 19. was water, and different from John's, why were they not baptized with it themſelves, before they went forth to baptize others? Is it not plain, that that commiſſion, as then verbally delivered, did not qualify them with power to adminiſter the baptiſm mentioned in it? Were they not to wait for "power from on high?" Were they ever able to adminiſter that baptiſm, till they were firſt baptized with the Holy Ghoſt themſelves?—Is not this a confirmation that, as they had firſt received and then oft adminiſtered John's

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baptiſm before, without this more powerful enduement and qualification, but could not adminiſter Chriſt's without it, that Chriſt's was quite a different thing from John's, and out of their reach or ability to communicate, but as it was poured upon them from on high, and flowed through them upon others? "Behold how good and how pleaſant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity; it is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the ſkirts of his garments: as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that deſcended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the bleſſing, even life for evermore," Pſalm cxxxiii. Is there nothing in the deſcending of this precious ointment, even down to the very ſkirts of the garment, in likeneſs of the living unity of the brethren, like the dew on Mount Hermon, and like the Lord's bleſſing on Mount Zion, that may give us ſome idea of the communication of the Holy Ghoſt, through the baptized Apoſtles, to and upon the ſouls of the people?—And is not this the one plain reaſon why they could not adminiſter Chriſt's baptiſm till livingly baptized themſelves, as the oil could not deſcend to the ſkirts till it was poured upon the head of Aaron?—And let it be once for all ſeriouſly conſidered—ought we not to hold it as a certainty that if the baptiſm in the commiſſion had been water, the Apoſtles would have been firſt baptized with it themſelves? Or can we ſuppoſe their having been baptized with John's baptiſm, by John, before they became Chriſt's diſciples, ſufficient to authorize them to adminiſter Chriſt's? But even though this were granted, will any ſay the Apoſtles never received Chriſtian baptiſm themſelves? If Chriſt's is water,

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and yet not John's, how could it poſſibly be diſpenſed with, in the caſe of the Apoſtles—in the caſe of Apollos, and the many which Paul taught, and begat unto God, but did not baptize in water?—We read of none ſent expreſsly to baptize in water, but John. If then, Chriſt's baptiſm had been with water, and yet not the ſame with John's, ought not Chriſt himſelf to have baptized his diſciples with it, before he ſent them to baptize others, ſeeing we have no account of any other but himſelf, that had any authority to adminiſter his baptiſm, till firſt baptized with it by him?—Who among the ſons of men had a right to adminiſter his baptiſm, before they were baptized with it themſelves? If none had a right ſo to do, then if his was with water, and yet different from John's, is it not certain that his Apoſtles never received it, ſeeing "Jeſus himſelf baptized not" with water, and none elſe had any right to adminiſter his baptiſm, till themſelves were baptized with it?—Does it not, therefore, plainly appear, that there is no other baptiſm with outward water but John's? And did not Jeſus himſelf wholly avoid baptizing any in water, on purpoſe that it might plainly appear that there is another? Or if there is any other with water but John's, when, where, and by whom did it begin?—Who firſt dared to adminiſter it? Would it now be thought lawful among the Baptiſts for any to adminiſter the baptiſm of water, who had not received it? And would it not have been very arrogating for any one in that day to have intruded himſelf into the office of an adminiſtrator of Chriſt's baptiſm, who had never himſelf received it? Or, had any ſo done, how would that convey a right to thoſe by ſuch an one baptized, to baptize others? I think we have all the reaſon we have a right to

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deſire to conclude, if Chriſt had ordained water baptiſm, he would have adminiſtered it to thoſe he had ſent to adminiſter it to others. And I reſt firmly perſuaded he never did ordain it, but that all the water baptiſm now practiſed among Chriſtians is derived from John, or elſe is altogether unauthorized in the New Teſtament. And why do thoſe who now uſe it, uſe a form of words never once uſed by any of the Apoſtles? If they ſay Chriſt commanded it, then why did not his Apoſtles obey his command? Is not this another ſtrong evidence that they were not commanded any form of words at all, nor any uſe of water, but that the words, into the name, &c. as plainly ſhew into what they were to baptize, as water would have been plainly ſhown, had the commiſſion been expreſsly to baptize into water?

It is urged by ſome, that putting on Chriſt, which all do who are baptized into him, Gal. iii. 27, is giving up their names to Chriſt in water baptiſm: but of thoſe baptized into Chriſt, in the Apoſtle's ſenſe, he here declares, "ye are all one in Chriſt Jeſus. And if ye be Chriſt's, then are ye Abraham's ſeed, and heirs according to the promiſe," 28, 29. that is, real heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt. This certainly is not true of as many as are baptized into water, though it certainly is true of as many as are baptized into Chriſt. Putting on Chriſt is therefore plainly thus, "put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and make not proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil the luſts thereof," Rom. xiii. 14. that is, "caſt off the works of darkneſs, and let us put on the armour of light," v. 12. This is directly baptiſm into the name, for "God is light," and Chriſt is light; and

and putting on the whole armour of light, is truly putting on Chriſt in baptiſm. And it is very ſtrikingly obſervable, that divers texts ſpeak expreſsly of baptiſm into Chriſt; thus preſerving the very intent and tenor of the commiſſion; for as all the fulneſs of the Godhead dwelleth in him, and as theſe texts expreſs baptiſm poſitively as being into him, and verbally in his name, as was the caſe conſtantly when water was uſed, it is as evident as any thing can well be, that this baptiſm into him is really putting on him, the life, the ſubſtance, the whole armour of light—and that this anſwers the commiſſion exactly, being into the name, the life, the power, the eternal virtue itſelf; and not into water, or any thing elſe, merely and verbally in the name.—I think this meaning of the words, into the name, &c. is much confirmed by a paſſage in the forementioned "plain account." The author pleads wholly for immerſion of adults in water; and to maintain it againſt ſprinkling of infants he ſays, p. 43, 44. "the word in Matthew, rendered teach, is not the word commonly rendered teach in the New Teſtament. The word commonly uſed is DIDASKO, which occurs very often; but the other word, MATHETEUO, teach, in the baptiſmal commiſſion of Matthew, is uſed only three times more in all the New Teſtament, Mat. xiii. 52, every ſcribe WHICH IS INSTRUCTED into the kingdom of heaven. Mat. xxvii. 57, Joſeph, who alſo himſelf was JESUS' DISCIPLE. Acts xiv, 21. when they had preached the goſpel to that city, and HAD TAUGHT many. They did not (ſays he) barely preach the goſpel, but taught ſo effectually, as to prevail on many to become diſciples or believers. This is the plain import of the original."

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Does not this make ſtrongly in favour of the Quakers' doctrine? Does it not ſhew the teaching, mentioned in this great commiſſion, was to be with divine power, and to prevail effectually to diſcipleſhip?—Was not this the reaſon they were commanded to wait to be endued with power from on high, becauſe they were now far otherwiſe to baptize people than they had done before? They were now to diſciple them; that is, teach them ſo livingly and effectually, as truly to baptize them into the name &c. Why elſe was this word MATHETEUO uſed here, to expreſs this peculiar kind of powerful, diſcipling, or baptiſmal teaching? a word uſed but three times more, as this author himſelf ſays, in all the New Teſtament.—He further ſays in the ſame page, that this word "implies teaching full as much as the more common word, DIDASKO. The difference is, that the former has a more preciſe and determinate meaning, conveying to the Apoſtles this idea, viz. "ſo teach the people as to perſuade them to become my diſciples."

Now, ſerious reader, ſeeing this paſſage does mean teaching, but at the ſame time is ſo very preciſe and determinate in its meaning, as to convey a clear idea of great difference from the ſimple common meaning of the word teach, plainly ſignifying to make diſciples by teaching, that is, to teach or diſciple all nations, baptizing them; let us ſee how the three other paſſages, where it is uſed, will concur with the doctrine of baptiſm into the name, &c. The firſt is Mat. xiii. 52, "every ſcribe which is inſtructed into the kingdom of heaven."—This is the ſame word that is rendered teach in the commiſſion: and here the ſcribe is inſtructed, taught or diſciplied

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into the kingdom of heaven.—I think this is the very baptiſm enjoined in that commiſſion: it is into the very life and ſubſtance intended by the name, to wit, the life, ſtrength and virtue of the kingdom; the ſtrong tower of ſafety, which the name of the Lord ever is to the righteous, the well inſtructed or truly diſcipled ſcribe. And we ſee this ſcribe is initiated into the kingdom by teaching, and that the very teaching, diſcipling, or inſtructing, which is enjoined in the commiſſion, and which therefore required power from on high to perform, becauſe it was a very different and much more effectual teaching (as this author maintains) than that expreſſed by the common word DIDASKO, teach. The ſecond paſſage is Mat. xxvii. 57, "Joſeph, who alſo himſelf was Jeſus' diſciple." It ſeems plainly this; he had been taught, inſtructed, diſcipled, in this more powerful way of teaching than that meant by the other word didaſko; that is, he was a ſcribe well inſtructed into the kingdom of heaven—or baptized into the eternal holy name, which is the ſame thing; for none can be a diſciple of Chriſt without his ſaving baptiſm.

THE third paſſage is Acts xiv. 21, "when they had preached the goſpel to that city, and had taught many"—that is, according to this author's own words, "taught ſo effectually as to prevail on many to become diſciples." "This (he adds) "is the plain import of the original." Then, it ſeems, they taught them juſt according to the commiſſion; and by which teaching they muſt have been baptized into the name; or (which is the ſame thing) inſtructed or diſcipled into the kingdom.—But this ſenſible author adds further, "the

" the common appellation of Chriſtian believers occurring in very numerous paſſages of the New Teſtament, is MATHETAI, diſciples. " As this" (ſays he) " is the uſual name of believers in Chriſt, we have the verb of it in our Lord's commiſſion, where he bids his followers to go and make converts to him throughout the world;" and p. 45 he quotes " Whitby's note on Mat. xxviii. 19" that is on the very commiſſion itſelf —ſaying, I deſire any one to tell me how the apoſtles could *matheteuin*, make a diſciple of an heathen, or unbelieving Jew, without being *mathetai*, or teachers of them."—By all which it is clear, that both the learned Whitby, and this learned author, were ſenſible that this extraordinary kind of teaching was making diſciples of Chriſt, believers in and real living converts to him: and it is certain none are ſuch without baptiſm into him—his diſciples, all true believers, all his ſincere converts, throughout the world, are baptized by the one ſpirit into one body; they drink all into one ſpirit, and are thus initiated, as well inſtructed ſcribes, into the kingdom of heaven.—Is it not marvellous that this writer was not, by the time he had ſeen and written thus much, ſo far inſtructed into it himſelf, as to have ſeen with equal clearneſs, that no part of all this had any thing to do with elementary water?—He maintains that the word *baptizo* always means immerſion or bathing all over in water; and rejects the ſprinklers, notions reſpecting 1 Cor. x. 2, " and were all baptized unto Moſes in the cloud, and in the ſea." The ſprinklers, idea on this paſſage he repreſents thus, p 28, " the cloud which hung over the children of Iſrael is a watery ſubſtance, ſprinkling its water

in drops. The ſea, which was as a wall unto them on the right hand and on the left, by force of the ſtrong wind which blew, ſent forth a great ſpray or ſprinkling. So they were plentifully ſprinkled by the cloud above, and by the waters on each ſide." This he cannot agree to. Let us ſee how he underſtands it, and whether he mends the matter. He thinks "a man of plain ſenſe, not thinking of this cloud or pillar of fire, dropping down water, but of opinion—that the baptiſm of ſcripture is immerſion, would be apt to carry his thoughts no further than to apprehend here is an alluſion to the cuſtom of immerſion; the Iſraelites being, as it were, covered with the cloud over, and the waters on each ſide of them." Thus they ſtumble on every hand, who are vainly contending for the figures. His remark is very juſt, that a man of plain ſenſe would not think of drops of water from a pillar of fire: and methinks it requires a little more than plain ſenſe to underſtand immerſion all over in water from this paſſage; but though a man "of opinion that the baptiſm of ſcripture is immerſion," might be very likely to ſtop ſhort of the ſubſtance, and apprehend nothing further than an "alluſion to the cuſtom of immerſion;" yet I do not ſee why a man of real plain ſenſe may not query how a pillar of fire can repreſent immerſion in water? Or how going through the ſea on dry land, as a firm foundation, points out bathing all over in that fluctuating unſtable element? The apoſtle in this paſſage expreſsly declares, they eat the ſame ſpiritual meat, and that they drink of that ſpiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Chriſt. Hence it appears, they ate and drank the very ſubſtance which the ſaints in all ages, live

live by. This indeed they muſt have eaten, or elſe have had no divine life in them. Eating the outward emblems of it never gave life divine to the ſoul, any more than outward baptiſm. Their eating outward manna, and drinking outward water from the rock, could never make their ſouls alive to God, and was but typical of that "ſpiritual meat" which they alſo and as truly ate, as they did the outward: and of "that ſpiritual rock whereof they drank; for that rock was Chriſt." And why may not plain ſenſe look a little further than to an "alluſion to the cuſtom of immerſion" for the ſubſtance of their baptiſm, as well as for the ſubſtance of their eating and drinking? For ſeeing they did truly feed in greater or leſs degree on Chriſt in ſpirit, as well as on outward manna, &c. and ſo enjoyed ſomething of the very life and ſubſtance of the Lord's ſupper; why may we not believe they were in degree ſubſtantially baptized into the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, and conformity to his death, as well as into thoſe deep outward trials and afflictions, ſo preſſingly experienced by them, whilſt conducted by the pillar of fire, and whilſt purſued by their enemies at and into the midſt of the red ſea? And thus the word *baptizo* may anſwer as well to plunging into fiery trials, as into water.

Our Saviour ſays, "I have a baptiſm to be baptized with, and how am I ſtraitened till it be accompliſhed," Luke xii. 50. And can it be doubted that thoſe who really fed on Chriſt in ſpirit, in that day, were in degree truly baptized with him into ſufferings, and in ſome degree at leaſt buried with him into death? In this way I think we may ſee ſomething further in their baptiſm than outward immerſion, and thus reſcue

the pillar of fire from either dropping down water, or importing immerſion into it; and indeed there ſeems little or no ſenſe in the paſſage underſtood as ſpeaking of either: for ſuppoſe we underſtand with the plain account "an alluſion to the cuſtom of immerſion," it then amounts to this—immerſion in water is a figure of purification—and Iſrael's paſſage through the ſea is a figure of that figure; or that the apoſtle, in his aſſertion here, that they were baptized, only had an alluſion to that figure. Now if it was nothing but a figure of a figure, I ſee not how he could poſitively in truth ſay, they were baptized.—Either they were, or were not—if they were properly baptized, it was inward or outward; if it was outward, and a proper water baptiſm, then either dipping, ſprinkling, or any thing that has a little reſemblance and will bear an "alluſion to the cuſtom of immerſion," may, for aught I can perceive, be called baptiſm. Why then contend ſo long and loud about the preciſe mode of it? If Paul meant as he ſaid, that they were baptized, I think he muſt mean ſpiritually: but if any will have it mean outward water baptiſm, do they not at once introduce a third kind, or a third mode of it, different from either immerſion or ſprinkling? At any rate, and turn it every way, will not the reſult be, either that Paul did not mean as he ſaid, that they really were baptized, but only that their paſſage reſembled baptiſm, and may bear an alluſion to it, or that he meant an outward baptiſm, without either dipping or ſprinkling, or that he meant an inward and ſpiritual baptiſm? The two firſt meanings I ſhould ſuppoſe moſt if not all would, on due conſideration, reject—the laſt I am confirmed

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is, as before evinced, the genuine meaning of the apoſtle. He is here preſſing it upon the once livingly baptized among the Corinthians, to hold out to the end. A few verſes before (ſee the preceding chapter, 1 Cor. ix. 24) he ſays, "ſo run that ye may obtain." 25th, "every man that ſtriveth for the maſtery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible. 26th, I therefore ſo run, not as uncertainly; ſo fight I, not as one that beateth the air; 27, but I keep under my body, and bring it into ſubjection, leſt that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myſelf ſhould be a caſt-away." Here he urges his own ſubjection, and the temperance of others, as examples; and then, to enforce the caution, impreſs the danger of their falling ſhort, and if poſſible prevent their becoming caſt-aways, he pertinently reminds them how it fared with ſome of the ancient fathers who came out of Egypt with Moſes; and who, though they had partaken of the true ſpiritual baptiſm, meat and drink of the ſaints, yet afterwards (ſuch is the weakneſs and danger of man) they luſted after evil things—murmured—tempted God—committed idolatry and fornication—and ſo were overthrown in the wilderneſs.—And in full confirmation that his aim in all this was to warn the Corinthians, he declares, "theſe things were our examples, to the intent that we ſhould not luſt after evil things, as they alſo luſted," nor tempt Chriſt, nor murmur, &c. as they did; and ſtrikingly adds, "wherefore let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall," v. 12. Perhaps all will agree, that thoſe thus warned by Paul had received Chriſtian baptiſm, whether it be agreed

or not what that was; and if Chriſtians were in all that great danger of falling, after the example of unbelief and apoſtacy here exhibited by him, and if this example was pertinent to their ſtate and danger, does not that pertinency conſiſt much in the Iſraelites having known a good degree of that which is ſaving, and turning from it? Nehemiah teſtifies, that the Lord ſaw their affliction in Egypt, and heard their cry by the red ſea, and gave alſo his good Spirit to inſtruct them, Neh. ix. 9, 20. God was ſo near and attentive to them, that he not only led them by; he even went himſelf before them in the pillar of cloud and of fire.

Let none therefore marvel that Paul ſays they were baptized in the cloud, ſeeing that holy preſence was actually there, into which all the ſpiritual Iſrael are baptized.—Moſes tells them, Deut. v. 4, "the Lord talked with you face to face"—and Iſaiah calls them the ranſomed, teſtifying, li. 10, that the Lord "made the depth of the ſea a way for the ranſomed to paſs over."—But in regard to their paſſage through the ſea, it is evident the cloud was not then over them, but behind them.—It had gone before them; but juſt before their going through, we read, "the angel of God, which went before the camp of Iſrael, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and ſtood behind them," Exod. xiv. 19, So that unleſs immerſion all over into and under water, or at leaſt an illuſion to it, can be gathered from their going through the ſea as on dry ground, with a cloudy and fiery pillar behind them, I cannot ſee any thing more in it for immerſion, than for

for ſprinkling; and in fact it appears to have nothing to do with either.

This author ſays, p. 41, "the diſciples of Chriſt, during his miniſtry on earth, as well as the diſciples of John, were very well acquainted with the inſtitution of baptiſm;" and agrees with Whitby, that "they only baptized, as John had done, into the faith of the Meſſiah which was to come, and with that baptiſm of repentance, which prepared the Jews for the reception of his kingdom." By this it is conceded, that during Chriſt's miniſtry on earth, that baptiſm which his diſciples uſed was the ſame as John's. No wonder then Chriſt never uſed it himſelf; and as he never once uſed it either before or after his reſurrection, as we do not find his twelve apoſtles were ever baptized in water, but only into John's baptiſm, as before noticed, it ſeems clear to me, that Chriſt's commiſſion does not contain water baptiſm.—His injunction to teach the people all things that he had commanded them, includes no ſuch obſervation; for he had not commanded it; nor does it appear that the diſciples ever uſed it, after Chriſt gave them this commiſſion, in any wiſe as a different ordinance from what it had been before. If it was John's, and uſed by them as his before, it was afterwards but a continuation of the ſame ordinance. It no where in all the Bible appears to be an ordinance of Chriſt; but having been in great veneration, was indulgently continued through weakneſs, even after the reſurrection.

Nothing can be goſpel baptiſm, that is not ſaving: it is the ſoul that needs purgation; the

baptiſm which effects this, cannot be that which is merely with elementary water; but muſt be that which burns up the filth, and removes the defilement; that is, the baptiſm into the name, the life, the cleanſing virtue of the divine nature. —Chriſt's baptiſm is ever deſcribed as ſaving, and none were ever ſaved without it. We all know that baptiſm into water may be received by ſuch as are not in any degree ſaved; and I think, if we exerciſe but the common reaſon of mankind, we muſt ſee, that if water baptiſm were ſaving, it were a conſtant miracle, and that as oft repeated as it proved ſaving, even as truly a miracle as the turning water into wine; for there is nothing in a bare waſhing in outward water, that has any more effect towards an inward cleanſing, than there is in anointing with oil, or ſhaving off the hair. If therefore it were the baptiſm of Chriſt, it muſt either be a ſtanding miraculous purification of ſouls by outward application, or a thing not ſaving; but the baptiſm of Chriſt is that which now ſaves us, and is in its own nature and operation as truly and conſtantly ſaving to the ſoul, as waſhing in water is cleanſing to the body. In proportion to the degree in which the body is waſhed in water, it is cleanſed by the outward putting away the filth of the fleſh; and in proportion to the degree in which any ſoul experienceth the baptiſm of Chriſt, it infallibly produceth inward ſanctification, by putting away the filth of the ſpirit. That name into which all the ſaints are baptized is ſuch, that their baptiſm into it muſt purify. Purification is the very thing itſelf, and that is the one plain reaſon why it not only is, but muſt be, a baptiſm into the holy name: "for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we muſt be ſaved,"

ſaved," Acts iv. 12. It is truly by the name, that we are ſaved; for this divine and living "name is as ointment poured forth," Cant. i. 3. This is the "unction from the holy one," 1 John ii. 20. "The name of the Lord is a ſtrong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is ſafe," Prov. xviii. 10. Well may they be ſafe in this name, ſeeing the baptiſm into it is ever ſaving.

Deeply ſenſible that there was no other ſalvation, the Pſalmiſt prays, liv. 1, "ſave me, O God, by thy name;" and Jeremiah ſays, x. 6, "thy name is great in might." Indeed his name is the ſtrength and ſalvation of his people; none can run into his name, or be gathered into it, or baptized into it, but they muſt at the ſame time be gathered and baptized into him.—Hence the ſcripture phraſe, "baptized into Chriſt;" and hence alſo the abſolute certainty that where two or three are gathered into his name, there he is in the midſt of them. See Mat. xviii. 20. He doth not ſimply promiſe that he will be; he declares "there am I in the midſt of them;" for he knew none could gather into his name, where he himſelf was not. The Greek word, truly tranſlated, is into; the ſame word uſed in Chriſt's baptiſmal commiſſion, and with great propriety; for none can be gathered into him who are not baptized into him—neither gathering in his name, nor baptiſm in it, profeſſionally availeth. —The promiſe of ſalvation is ſure to none but thoſe who are truly gathered and baptized into the name itſelf: and to theſe it cannot fail; for the name has all healing virtue in it. "Holy Father" (ſays Chriſt) "keep through thine own name thoſe whom thou haſt given me, that they may

may be one, as we are," John xvii. 11. "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name," 12. If ye ſhall aſk any thing" (ſays he) "in my name, I will do it," xiv. 14. This can never fail, any more than ſalvation can fail to ſuch as are truly and thoroughly baptized into his name; for as this baptiſm is ſalvation, ſo aſking in his name is in his own life, ſpirit and power, and he cannot deny himſelf. As the Father always hears him, becauſe his aſking in his the Father's life and power; ſo he always hears and cannot avoid hearing, all who aſk in his name; for the one plain and all ſufficient reaſon, that his name is his life and ſpirit, his power and preſence; and all done in it, is done to purpoſe; for therein there is no lack—therein is fulneſs, and divine ſufficiency. We are complete therein for ever, without any of the ſigns or ſymbols of former diſpenſations.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VII.

*Paul's epiſtles to the Galatians and Coloſſians written purpoſely to diſſuade from attachment to ſhadowy ordinances. Circumciſion, water baptiſm, &c. plainly ſuperceded; and true Chriſtians ſhewn to be* complete in Chriſt *without them. This the evident ſcope of theſe epiſtles. This chapter contains many quotations from, and remarks on them.*

SEVERAL of the epiſtles ſeem to have been written on purpoſe to diſſuade from attachment to and retention of the rituals of ſhadowy diſpenſations. Paul having his knowledge of Chriſt by immediate revelation, knew the diſpenſation of figurative inſtitutions was ended; and that Chriſtians viewing lifeleſs ſigns as goſpel ordinances, muſt powerfully divert and detain them from the living, ſaving ſubſtance: hence he preſſingly invites to Chriſt, the life and ſubſtance, and warns againſt a continuance of ceremonials. —His epiſtles to the Galatians and Coloſſians, and a good deal of ſeveral others, are full to this purpoſe. Some troubleſome perſons had got in among

among the Galatians, inſiſting on circumciſion, and the rites of the law; and had ſo influenced the believers, that this inſpired apoſtle vehemently expoſtulates with them for being ſo eaſily ſhaken from grace (of itſelf ſufficient for all) and turned to elementary obſervances, chap. i. 6, 7. "I marvel that ye are ſo ſoon removed from him that called you into the grace of Chriſt, unto another goſpel." But as rituals are not of the goſpel, he immediately adds, "which is not another; but there be ſome that trouble you, and would pervert the goſpel of Chriſt."—Indeed every attempt to eſtabliſh ceremonial inſtitutions as goſpel ordinances, is directly an attempt to pervert the goſpel, and fruſtrate its bleſſed deſign, that of ſuperceding all thoſe figurative obſervations. And on this ground he pronounces any one, even though it were himſelf and companions, or an angel from heaven, that ſhould preach any other goſpel than that already preached unto them, accurſed, v. 18.—The goſpel that Paul preached, was Chriſt within, the word nigh in the heart and in the mouth; which he expreſsly calls the righteouſneſs which is of faith; and declares of this inward word, "that is, the word of faith which we preach." See Rom. x. 6, 8.—A few words before he had declared, "Chriſt is the end of the law, for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth." Hence it is evident, that this inward word of faith, which he preached as nigh in the heart, &c. is that which ſupercedes and ends the ſigns and ſhadows of the law to true believers.

The Iſraelites had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge; for they being ignorant of God's righteouſneſs (the inward righteouſneſs of faith—Chriſt, the word in the heart) and going

going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs (in the figurative obſervances, the letter and ceremonies of the law, and creaturely performances) have not ſubmitted themſelves unto the righteouſneſs of God." See v. 2, 3. That he means by the righteouſneſs of God, this inward living word in the heart, and by their not ſubmitting to it, their non-ſubjection to the motions and teachings of it, is evident by the 6th, 7th and 8th verſes. " But the righteouſneſs which is of faith ſpeaketh on this wiſe; ſay not in thine heart, who ſhall aſcend into heaven? (that is, to bring Chriſt down from above:) or who ſhall deſcend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Chriſt again from the dead) but what ſaith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach." This will remain, through all ages, the one only goſpel of life and ſalvation. It is Chriſt in man, and ends the types and ſhadows. Were it not Chriſt himſelf the divine and holy word in the ſoul, did it not unite the life of the ſoul with the life of God, and bring into ſubjection to him, dependence upon him, and action by him, it would never effect complete ſalvation for until all this is witneſſed, God becomes not our " all in all." Though we have known Chriſt after the fleſh (ſaith the apoſtle) yet now henceforth know we him no more," 2 Cor. v. 16.—It was neceſſary he went away, as to his viſible appearance in the fleſh, that he might come again, or more fully in ſpirit abide with and comfort his for ever. This he promiſed, and performs it to every true believer, who rightly looks for him in ſpirit, not gazing up into heaven, watching for his outward coming, or ſeeking to know him after the fleſh: unto all who thus inwardly look

for

for him, he appears in them, where his kingdom is "without sin to salvation." See Heb. ix. 28. This final coming to judgment will be to thousands who look not for him, and will not be unto their salvation, but condemnation, to their shame and everlasting contempt; but his second coming is promised only unto them that look for him, and is to their salvation. And thus he did come to those he said should not taste of death till they saw the kingdom; for this is truly the coming of his kingdom on earth, to those who rightly wait and pray for it, and livingly experience it, which many then did; for says the apostle, Col. i. 13. "who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Here Christ sitteth on the throne of the heart, in his inward kingdom; for Paul tells the Galatians that it had pleased God, who called him by his grace, "to reveal his Son in him;" This entirely supercedes the occasion of signs, as eating, drinking, or the like, to keep him in remembrance. This inward revelation and knowledge of the Son, in man, the hope of his glory, was a mystery that had been hidden from ages and generations.—The mists of darkness, and their resting in the law of carnal commandments and ceremonies, had hid and vailed from their minds the clear knowledge of it: but the vail being done away in Christ to the saints, in that day, the apostle declares this mystery was "made manifest to them;" —and goes on to shew what is the very life, riches and glory of it; saying, "to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you the hope of glory." See Col. i. 26, 27.

There

There never was but one true life and ſubſtance of religion.—Hence though this myſtery of Chriſt within was greatly hid to moſt men for ages, yet was it the very thing Moſes referred Iſrael to of old. Deut. xxx. 14, "the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayeſt do it." Here Moſes preached the goſpel: and Paul affirms it was preached to Abraham, Gal. iii. 8. Indeed it muſt be ſo; for Abraham ſaw Chriſt's day, rejoiced in it, and came in degree into the life of it, though not to the end of all the ſigns.—He not only ſaw it, as then to come in greater fulneſs and glory; he knew it in himſelf; for when the Jews ſaid to Chriſt, "thou art not yet fifty years old, and haſt thou ſeen Abraham?" he did not eſcape their delemma by telling them, Abraham foreſaw his day afar off. That was not the thing he aimed at: but he came directly to the ever important point, to the very life of the matter; "verily, verily, I ſay unto you, before Abraham was, I am," John viii. 57, 58: not I was; for, as the holy word (the ſame that appears in the heart) he is the eternal *am*.—Abraham knew and enjoyed him as ſuch, as the life and ſubſtance of the new covenant, "four hundred and thirty years" before the giving of the outward law.—This is the inward goſpel which Paul learned by the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt, Gal. i. 12—by God's revealing his Son in him: had he not ſo learned it, but only taken it by report from others, though well authenticated, he might have preached up Jeſus and the reſurrection in word, with as much zeal as ever he had in the Jews religion, while he was ſo "exceedingly zealous of the traditions of his fathers," v. 14, and yet never

never at all have preached the goſpel of Chriſt, which ever is in itſelf (and is never preached but in) the power of God to ſalvation.

I mourn that the preachers of our day ſo generally lay hold of the hiſtory of the goſpel in the letter, out of the life and power of it—zealouſly urging and uſing elementary obſervances, as ordinances of Chriſt, to the ſubverſion of many ſouls from a cloſe and ſingle attention to the inward word of life; under which, for a ſeaſon, they have been well exerciſed. Thus "the letter killeth," 2 Cor. iii. 6. The literal preaching of what is called the goſpel, being out of the newneſs of life, leading into and landing in the ceremonials of religion, has ſlain its tens of thouſands, even of ſuch as have in degree begun in the ſpirit, and run well for a ſeaſon; but by and by, through the influence of this lifeleſs miniſtry, have turned to and come under the ſhadows, and there reſted from the further purſuit of their journey in the ſpirit, which they ought to have fervently proſecuted in the open light, and under the warmth and animating beams of the ſun. Paul knew the danger of theſe things, and conſidered the attempts of thoſe "falſe brethren" to continue the obſervance of outward ordinances, as directly tending to bring the believers "into bondage," Gal. ii. 4, and would not give place to them, "by ſubjection" (to ſuch obſervances) "no not for an hour, that the truth of the goſpel" (ſays he) "might continue with you," v. 5. By the truth of the goſpel, he means its pure and genuine ſimplicity, unfettered with ſigns and ceremonies; againſt the retention whereof he was ſo bold and faithful, that he declares

clares he even withſtood Peter "to the face," at Antioch, v. 11. and reproved him "before them all," for compelling the "Gentiles to live as do the Jews," 14; and eſpecially, ſeeing he himſelf had, "before that certain came from James," eaten with, and lived "after the manner of the Gentiles."

And then this great apoſtle pertinently inculcates, that even the believing Jews themſelves could not be "juſtified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jeſus Chriſt," 16. It is evident he means, by the works of the law, the outward obſervances of it; for he is here expreſsly labouring againſt the continuance of theſe, as will yet further appear. The 3d chapter begins thus, "O fooliſh Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye ſhould not obey the truth?" the 2d and 3d verſes query, "this only would I learn of you, received ye the ſpirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? are ye ſo fooliſh? having begun in the ſpirit, are ye now made perfect by the fleſh?" all true religion, in every age and nation, ever began in the ſpirit; and all that ever continued in true religion, continued in the ſpirit: and no man ever enjoyed any more of it than he enjoyed in the ſpirit. None ever were, or ever will be, "made perfect by the fleſh;" by any thing man, as man, can do; nor receive the ſpirit by the works and obſervations of the law; though many are acting as if they thought they could not be complete in Chriſt alone, or be "made perfect" in and by his holy ſpirit, without the addition of "weak and beggarly elements." It ſeems the Galatians were of the ſame

mind. They began in the ſpirit, but not being content to abide in it, advance forward in it, and depend ſingly upon it, they were ſeeking to be "made perfect," or completed in the work of religion, by ceremonial obſervations. Againſt this departure from a ſingle reliance on that holy ſpirit which began the work, the apoſtle was zealouſly engaged, and declares, v. 11. "the juſt ſhall live by faith." What faith? The righteouſneſs of that inward word of faith, which Paul preached "nigh in the heart and mouth." For there never was nor can be but one thing, through all time, that the juſt could or ever can live by; and that is this inward word of life, the ſpiritual fleſh and blood of Chriſt. "He that eateth me, even he ſhall live by me," ſaith the bleſſed Jeſus, John vi. 57; and he that eateth him not truly and ſubſtantially (how oft ſoever he eats the figures, and how loud ſoever he proclaims his faith) has "no life in him," 53. This is the tree of life, in the "midſt of the paradiſe of God." This heals the nations of them that walk in the light of the lamb; and by this, and this only, they live unto God. Hence Paul ſays, "I live, yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the fleſh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." Gal. ii. 20; that is, by the faith of Chriſt living in him. He was "dead to the law, that he might live unto God," 19. He renounces all mere legal, ceremonial righteouſneſs, and comes home to Chriſt alive in his own ſoul. He mentions the "bleſſing of Abraham" as coming "on the Gentiles" only through "Jeſus Chriſt" the life; and the receiving of "the promiſe of the ſpirit," only

"through

" through faith," chap. iii. 14. This is experimental religion, all ſtanding in that faith which is " of the operation of God" in the ſoul, Col. ii. 12. and which is the very life and " ſubſtance of things hoped for," and therefore, and therefore only, it is alſo the ſure and certain " evidence of things not ſeen." See Heb. xi. 1. Many ſtrive hard to believe, and think they do believe; but no mere opinion, or ſimple credence, is the faith of the goſpel. No other faith than that which is in its own nature the very " ſubſtance of the things hoped for," can be a ſure and unſhaken evidence of the eternal inheritance, the things not yet ſeen.

" To Abraham and his ſeed were the promiſes made. He ſaith not, and to ſeeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy ſeed, which is Chriſt. And this I ſay, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Chriſt, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot diſannul, that it ſhould make the promiſe of none effect," Gal. iii. 16, 17. " And if ye be Chriſt's, then are ye Abraham's ſeed, and heirs according to the promiſe," 29. Obſerve, reader, the covenant is confirmed only in Chriſt, the life, the word in the heart, the inward " hope of glory." The promiſe is to all that are Chriſt's, and to them only, God promiſed that in Abraham, and in his ſeed, Chriſt, all nations ſhould be bleſſed. This " promiſe is ſure to all the ſeed;" ſee Rom. iv. 16; to all that are " born again of God," begotten into ſonſhip and joint heirſhip with Chriſt, by this " incorruptible ſeed, and word of God," in the heart. This alone is the true faith, wherein all the children of it

" are bleſſed with faithful Abraham," Gal. iii. 9. It runs not in the outward blood, nor in the line of faith merely profeſſional. It was never obtained by the obſervance of rituals: nor is it known but by a real baptiſm into death with Chriſt, and ariſing with him in the newneſs of life. " For if there had been a law given, which could have given life, verily righteouſneſs ſhould have been by the law," v. 21. But as nothing can give divine life to the ſoul, but that which brings it into the life of the ſon, or the ſtate of real ſonſhip, by the union of the ſoul with the life of the holy word; and as all thus begotten and born of God, feel their dependence to be wholly on God their Father; their looking is wholly unto him for aid and protection. Hence this great apoſtle, chap. iv. v. 6, of this epiſtle, declares, " becauſe ye are ſons, God hath ſent forth the ſpirit of his ſon into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Here is the alone true life of faith in the ſoul. Here is divine reliance upon the Father. It is in the ſtate of real ſonſhip, the Emanuel ſtate, where God and man unite in the heavenly fellowſhip, and ſubſtantial relationſhip. This is beyond all figurative obſervations. " The law made nothing perfect," but " was added becauſe of tranſgreſſions."—But for how long? " till the ſeed ſhould come, to whom the promiſe was made," chap. iii. 19. But if the law was added, becauſe of tranſgreſſions, till the ſeed came, and John, the forerunner, to prepare his way, declares the axe muſt be laid to the root of the corrupt trees, till they are all " hewn down, and caſt into the fire," and that the chaff muſt be burned up, and the floor thoroughly cleanſed; how idle is it, for any to think of ſalvation by Chriſt,

Chriſt, and that they are not under the law, but under grace, becauſe they aſſent to the hiſtory of the goſpel, and ſay they believe in Jeſus, whilſt living a life of ſin, and continuing in tranſgreſſion, the very thing for which "the law was added," and which the life, ſtrength and authority of the moral precepts of it were and will be over, and therefore over men, ſo far as in tranſgreſſion, and ſenſible of it; and ſo far they are and ever will be under the law, and not under the dominion and government of grace. For grace ſaveth; and juſt ſo far as we are under it, we are ſaved from ſin; and ſo far as we are not ſaved from ſin, we are not under grace. Chriſt never ſaves a ſoul in ſin. Indeed, in the complete ſenſe of the word ſalvation, he cannot. It is a contradiction in itſelf. It would be ſaved, and not ſaved. For ſalvation is from ſin. Therefore it is ſaid, "thou ſhalt call his name Jeſus" (that is a ſaviour) "for he ſhall ſave his people from their ſins," Mat. i. 21. The whole ſcope of the goſpel is ſalvation from ſin, and a new life in holineſs, really and inherently ſo; not merely imputatively. Mere imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, without the implantation of it, is a dangerous doctrine, indeed a real impoſſibility. Chriſt redeems from the ſhadows of the law, by bringing and uniting the ſoul to the ſubſtance; and that may be the main reaſon why ſo few profeſſed Chriſtians are yet redeemed from them; for none are any further truly redeemed, even from the ſhadows, than they are ſo by the life and poſſeſſion of the ſubſtance. For as "circumciſion is nothing," ſo ſimple "uncircumciſion is nothing." But the living faith, the new creature, the ſubſtance, is all in all. Many think much

of themſelves, becauſe they are baptized in water, partake of the bread and wine, &c. And many think much of themſelves becauſe they avoid them, and ſuppoſe they ſee beyond them. But if even the latter is only a ſpeculative or merely rational convincement, it is nothing: it is not the true and living redemption of Chriſt "from the rudiments of the world;" for that never advances further or faſter in any ſoul, than the ſoul advances in the knowledge and enjoyment of the ſubſtance. It is Chriſt himſelf, the ſeed, the life, the ſubſtance, that is the end of the law. And ſo, as none are truly redeemed from the ſhadows of it, but by and in the ſubſtance; ſo none are redeemed from the curſe of it, the penalty due for the tranſgreſſions of its moral precepts, until, nor a whit further than, they know Chriſt, the ſeed, the ſubſtance, to finiſh ſin, and make an end of tranſgreſſion in them individually. For this is the only real deſtruction of the works of the devil, that Chriſt ever makes; and conſequently, all the redemption from the curſe, or penalty of the law, that men ever really do know—ſave the forgiveneſs and remiſſion of ſins already committed, through the mercy of God in Chriſt Jeſus. So far, therefore, as we ſin againſt God, we are not under grace, but at beſt under the law. Nor ſhall ever "one jot, or one tittle, paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled." If any ſoul is not under the curſe of it, but under grace, it is becauſe Chriſt, the ſeed, redeems and preſerves him from the ſtate of tranſgreſſion, on account of which it was added. And yet ſalvation is in no wiſe by the deeds of the law, but by Chriſt, who redeems, and liveth in us, and is our life, above and beyond

yond the law. "Is the law, then, againſt the promiſes of God? God forbid," ſays the apoſtle, Gal. iii. 21. "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, ſhut up unto the faith which ſhould afterwards be revealed," 23. Before the word of faith is revealed in the heart, before the Son of God is revealed in men, as God revealed him in Paul, the law ſerves as a ſchool-maſter; hence the Apoſtle's very next words, verſe 24, are, "wherefore the law was our ſchool-maſter, to bring us unto Chriſt, that we might be juſtified by faith." Faith being the ſubſtance, as before ſhewn, "of things hoped for;" and being "of the operation of God" in man, the word nigh in the heart, which is the word of faith the Apoſtles preached; when this was livingly known, in dominion over all in the ſoul, the uſe of the ſchool-maſter was ſuperceded: and this is the ſubſtantial experience of ſuch as are riſen with Chriſt, above the rudiments of the world, and the law of carnal commandments, in every age of the world. So the Apoſtle's next words are, v. 25, &c. "but after that faith is come, we are no longer under a ſchool-maſter. For ye are all the children of God, by faith in Chriſt Jeſus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Chriſt, have put on Chriſt." Here the law is fulfilled, in putting "on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt," —"the whole armour of light;" caſting "off the works of darkneſs," and making "no proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil the luſts thereof," according to Rom. xiii. 12, 14. Well may this ſupercede the law, ſeeing this baptiſm into Chriſt, this putting him on, as the whole armour of light, ſo effectually redeems from the works of darkneſs, and the luſts of the fleſh; agreeably alſo to Eph. vi. 11.

"put

" put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to ſtand againſt the wiles of the devil."

Some will underſtand this baptiſm into Chriſt, to mean outward baptiſm. The author of the aforeſaid " plain account" quotes Biſhop Burnet, deſcribing the primitive baptiſm in water, and ſaying, " from whence came the phraſes of being baptized into Chriſt's death; of being buried with him by baptiſm into death; of our being riſen with Chriſt; and of our putting on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; of putting off the old man, and putting on the new?" page 30. Thus men, by attachment to rituals, are liable to have their minds vailed, from beholding the obviouſly inward and ſpiritual meaning of ſcripture, or at leaſt turned to ſeek or ſuppoſe an outward ſignification, where none ſeems neceſſary or intended, but that which centers in the life and ſubſtance. Baptiſm into Chriſt, is into the name, the power and influence of the divinity, according to the commiſſion. It is not true, that all who are baptized in water, " have put on Chriſt;" but only ſuch as are actually baptized into Chriſt himſelf, the divine eternal ſubſtance; and therefore the apoſtle limits it to ſuch only, by the words, " as many of us." Thoſe who hold water baptiſm an eſſential, or as that which ſaves, or is the " one baptiſm," I ſuppoſe, hold that all the believers received it: but Paul ſpeaks here of only as many as were abſolutely baptized into Chriſt, not into water, verbally in his name, but into him, ſo as to put him on, by putting on his nature, life and diſpoſition; love, meekneſs, temperance, and all thoſe virtues predominant in ſuch in whom he lives and reigns, and againſt whom there is

therefore

therefore no law: for it is by thus putting on Chriſt, and living in him, and he in us, our life, and hope of glory, in that wherein there is no tranſgreſſion, that we are redeemed from the bondage, penalty and rudiments of the law, into "the glorious liberty of the ſons of God." This is the one goſpel baptiſm. It is ſtrictly into Chriſt, into the name, the ſaving name of the Lord, the ſtrong tower of ſalvation and ſafety, the name that is as ointment poured forth; the ſaving healing influences whereof make all the ſincere virgins love him. The ſame baptiſm, with the ſame word into, ſeveral times repeated, the apoſtle again mentions, Rom. vi. 3. 4. "So many of us," and he might have ſaid only ſo many, and doubtleſs meant ſo, "as were baptized into Jeſus Chriſt, were baptized into his death. Therefore we are buried with him by baptiſm into death. Now ſee the fruits of it, which cannot reſult from baptiſm into water; "that like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the dead, by the glory of the father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of life; and, verſe 5, "for if we have been planted together in the likeneſs of his death" (that is, into a real death to all ſin, for his baptiſm thoroughly cleanſes the floor of the heart) "we ſhall be alſo in the likeneſs of his reſurrection." This is what the apoſtle means by walking in newneſs of life; as is plain by the connexion, "for if," &c. Can any thing be plainer, than that this is all an inward and ſpiritual work; an actual baptiſm into real death unto ſin, and ariſing into life with Chriſt (that then liveth in us) in his inward reſurrection and glory in the ſoul? and hence the baptiſm that now ſaves us,

not

not the putting away the filth of the outward flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, is rightly, and ever with divine propriety, said to be "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." And now, to evince that this is all inward, and that this of being "planted together in the likeness of his death," in baptism, is not being dipped into water, but into a real death to sin; let us observe well, that the apostle declares positively, without any exception, that if we have been so planted "into the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection," which certainly is not true of all that are baptized in water, though they may call that "the likeness of his death." For many have been so baptized, who have had no experience of this likeness of his resurrection, this walking in newness of life. Simon the sorcerer both believed (see how little a mere lifeless believing amounts to) and was so baptized; and yet he was in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity; having neither part nor lot in the true Christian baptism, Acts viii. 13, 21, 23: which shews plainly, that our blessed Saviour's words in the commission, Mark xvi. 16, "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," relate wholly to that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, and to that baptism which is truly into the likeness of Christ's death, into death unto sin, and a new life unto holiness, by the resurrection and the life of Christ in us, the hope of glory. And as this in Mark, is the same commission with that in Matthew, it further confirms that the baptism mentioned in both is that which is saving, and could not be that of water; since the promise is to him that believeth, and

and is baptized with it, that he "shall be saved." This promise is sure, for this baptism is into the name of the Lord, the strong tower, in which the righteous abiding, ever find safety, defence and preservation; while a bare dipping in water, professionally in the name, preserves none from evil.

But further, that Paul meant as above explained, by this planting, death, burial and resurrection, his very next words declare, v. 6, "knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." This is the death produced by the fiery baptism of Jesus, the crucifixion of our old corrupt man, the destruction of the body of sin in us. And is it not strange, that any real Christian should not understand this, seeing it is the very thing which John the Baptist (in direct contradistinction to the baptism of water) declares of Christ's, by the mention of the axe, fan, and fire, and the work effected by them, amounting to absolute purification? May these things be well laid to heart, by all who hope to be saved by a simple though hearty and sincere belief of facts, and immersion in outward water; for this is not the faith and the baptism to which the promise of salvation holds good for ever. And for any to use water, as gospel baptism, and not consider it saving, is to run counter to the design and express declaration of scripture in regard to the baptism of Jesus.

The fourth chapter to the Galatians begins asserting, "that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord

lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world," v. 1, 2, 3. Here we see the son himself submitted to the elements, the signs and ceremonials, unto which also the children were in bondage for a season; and to prevent their continuance under which, the apostle was now zealously endeavouring, having seen clearly beyond them himself, and been a living witness of their abolition. By the next verses, it is clear, that Christ's submitting to these elementary things, and being made under the law, was so far from perpetuating outward, elementary baptism, or any other rituals, that it was purposely "to redeem them that were under the law." Why then should we, who never were under that law of carnal ordinances, nor yet under the dispensation of John's baptism (which was for Christ's manifestation to Israel) unless by our own voluntary act, desire to come into bondage to these things, called here by Paul "the elements of the world?" Those outward things were abundantly proved weak and insufficient, or the law under which they were enforced had remained to enforce them still. All figurative immersions, sprinklings, eatings and drinkings, are altogether as weak, insufficient and unavailing, now, as ever they were; and it is an evidence of human weakness to continue in, and desire to be in bondage to them; as much so, as was the attachment of the Galatians to circumcision, &c. Paul, thoroughly convinced of this weakness of all mere signs and symbolical observations, therefore pertinently, and as it were with amazement, queries, v. 9, "how turn ye again to the weak and

and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" 10, "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years." 11, "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." And how many days and times are now appointed, and rigidly observed, even in our days? Set times and seasons, in man's will and wisdom, for fasting, prayers, thanksgivings, eating bread, and drinking wine, &c. And how much further a punctual conformity and observance, in these things, often goes towards conciliating the favour of men, and even of princes, than purity of life, integrity of conduct, and humanity towards all ranks of mankind, deserves serious consideration. And is it at all strange, that Paul, observing how great weight these weak things were obtaining, even among such as had really "known God," v. 9. (and who therefore had received that which was all-sufficient in itself, if lived in, and relied singly on, for salvation, and eternal life, without any elementary observations whatever) was really alarmed, and afraid lest his labours to establish them in the purity and truth of the gospel should prove in vain? especially when those who had lately almost adored him, were so soon and so far infected with this zeal for ceremonials, as to give grounds for his query, v. 16, "am I become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" Is it strange, that he calls the retrograde motion of such as had "known God" for themselves, from that inward knowledge, to outward rites, turning "again to the weak and beggarly elements?" In the next verse, 17, speaking of those who strove to bring them into this bondage to the elements, he says, "they zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude

exclude you, that ye might affect them." They were very zealous in their attempts to embondage them to the elements, as too many now are; but this zeal was not well, but very ill; for they went so far, it seems, as to attempt or desire to exclude such as were backward to conform, and come into this bondage, that by this exclusion they might be driven or prevailed on to affect them, or their doctrines and notions. This their zeal and labour was quite different from Paul's. He was for the life; they, the letter. He for the substance; they, the symbols. Do but hear him, v. 19, "my little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you." He knew the letter killeth," and that zeal in the sign often obstructs the growth and formation of Christ, the substance in the soul: so he travails as it were in birth again for their advancement and perfection in the latter. It would seem, by their being truly his "little children," and by his now travailing in birth again, that is, for the more complete growth and full formation of Christ in them, that they had been already in degree truly begotten and born of God: and that the Apostle, in the labour he had before bestowed upon them, had already once travailed, as in birth for and with them; but that they, instead of rightly advancing in the travail, growth and full formation of Christ in themselves, unto the state of perfect men in him, "to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;" had been obstructed and diverted therefrom, by turning to the weak and beggarly elements;" and that therefore such was the Apostle's good will to them, he was now again engaged in travail for their attainment of what was lacking in them; the complete formation

formation and growth of Chriſt, whoſe growth and increaſe of ſtature in man is gradual and progreſſive: as was the caſe in that prepared body, wherein he grew, and "increaſed in wiſdom and ſtature, and in favour with God and man," Luke ii. 52. And, to win them wholly to Chriſt, and wean them from beggarly elements, Paul reaſons with them in the following verſes, from Abraham's two ſons, "the one by a bond-maid (repeſenting this elementary bondage) the other by a free woman, Gal. iv. 22; the firſt, "was born after the fleſh," the laſt, "by promiſe," 23: "which things" (ſaith he) "are an allegory; for theſe are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar," 24. "For this Agar is Mount Sinai, in Arabia, and anſwereth to Jeruſalem, which now is, and is in bondage with her children," 25. "But Jeruſalem, which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all," 26. And the few following verſes declare believers to be, with Iſaac, "Children of the promiſe;" that the children of the fleſh perſecute theſe, as Iſhmael did Iſaac; that the ſon of the bond-woman was caſt out, "for the ſon of the bond-woman ſhall not be heir with the ſon of the free." And immediately upon theſe words the chapter concludes, "ſo then, brethren, we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free." And the next very pertinently begins, "ſtand faſt, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free; and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Then inſtancing one particular rite, he declares, "if ye be circumciſed, Chriſt ſhall profit you nothing;" that ſuch as are ſo, are debtors to do the whole law; that

Chriſt

Chriſt is become of no effect to thoſe who ſeek to "be juſtified by the law; and poſitively aſſerts of them, "ye are are fallen from grace."

Little do the zealous advocates for outward ordinances think how their attachment thereto hinders their real juſtification, by the true and living faith and grace of the goſpel, even amidſt all their talk of juſtification, by faith in Chriſt alone. Perhaps they never conſider that theſe fooliſh Galatians, with all their deſires of bondage to the beggarly elements, might be as loud in profeſſion of faith in Chriſt, and in their claim to juſtification by his blood, as any now are. I deſire to know (if it is ſo) why it is more impoſſible for a man circumciſed to be profited by Chriſt, or why he is any more fallen from grace, than a man baptized in water. I cannot perceive that either circumciſion or baptiſm prevents profit by Chriſt, any further than the mind is thereby turned from him, and from a ſingle reliance upon the work of his grace in the heart for ſalvation; nor that either the one or the other, or any other outward performance, will ever fail to prevent it, ſo far as the mind is thereby turned away from an inward attention unto and firm dependence upon him who remains to be the reſurrection and the life, in all true believers, the word nigh in the heart and mouth, for counſel, direction, and ſalvation. In ſo far as any ceremonial diverts the mind of one that has truly "known God" in himſelf, from attention to his inward appearance and work in the heart, ſuch an one is ſo far "fallen from grace," and no further than he is ſo diverted. And I can ſee nothing in circumciſion a whit more likely ſo to divert him, than in water baptiſm,

tiſm. One, as far as I can conceive, is juſt as likely to keep him from Chriſt, as the other. This may ſeem ſtrange to many. But I think they can give no ſound reaſon why one ſhould be ſo hurtful, and the other ſo harmleſs, as they may imagine. Diſtinctions, however ill founded, when long ſettled in idea, ſeem real; but examined to the bottom, are found to have no exiſtence but in ſpeculation. And believing many diſtinctions of long ſtanding among Chriſtian profeſſors are of this kind, I think I can truly ſay, I travail in ſpirit, if not in birth, for them, that they may dig deep for the foundation, and build on the ſure rock of ages. Then their buildings will not fall, but ſtand all winds and weathers. It is much better patiently, with Paul (v. 5.) "through the Spirit, to wait for the hope of righteouſneſs by faith," than haſtily to ruſh into bondage, v. 7. "Ye did run well; who did hinder you, that ye ſhould not obey the truth?" 8. "This perſuaſion cometh not of him that calleth you," 9. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." This I firmly believe is juſt the caſe with many, whom the Lord in theſe days calls, by his holy Spirit working in them. They give up to the call; begin, like the Galatians, in the Spirit; run well for a ſeaſon. By and by, in ſteps the adverſary of ſouls, or, by the art and addreſs of ſome high in eſteem with them, they are abſolutely hindered from obeying the truth, in keeping ſingly to the Spirit they began in; and by a perſuaſion that cometh not from him that called and ſtill calleth them to perſevere on in the Spirit, they are diverted to the elements, take up a falſe reſt in the ſhadows, and gradually, perhaps almoſt imperceptibly to themſelves, depart from Chriſt, the

inward life; and fall away from the lively influences of grace in their own ſouls, till the whole lump is leavened, with the leaven of the Phariſees; a fruitleſs, lifeleſs zeal in rituals, a round of creaturely devotions and performances; drawing near the Lord with the mouth, and ſeeming to honour him with the lip, whilſt the heart is far from him. In order to prevent which, I think Paul's direction, v. 25, very pertinent and proper: "if we live in the Spirit, let us alſo walk in the Spirit." And ſo walking, I am perſuaded lifeleſs forms will be forſaken, beggarly elements abandoned, old things done away, all things become new, all things of God, in ſpirit and in truth, in the newneſs of divine life: for I can never believe, that the Spirit not only lived in, (as to what paſſeth in the ſecret of the ſoul) but alſo diligently and ſtrictly walked in (as to all our outward religious or devotional exerciſes) will fail to lead out of, or preſerve from, every undue attachment to ſigns and ceremonials, or any thing that genders to bondage.

Now, notwithſtanding the length of theſe quotations from the epiſtle to the endangered Galatians, and of the foregoing remarks, I am not eaſy to omit ſeveral paſſages to the Coloſſians; the epiſtle to them alſo being pointedly againſt ſubjection to ordinances.

Paul was fervent in ſpirit, in prayers and deſires for them, that they might be "fruitful in every good work;" increaſing in the knowledge of God, and "filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wiſdom, and ſpiritual underſtanding,"

chap.

chap. i. 9, 10: but was so far from pointing out water baptism, or any other mere ceremonial, as promotive of this happy experience, as pertaining to fruitfulness in every good work, or as being included in the word every in this sentence, or at all belonging to those purely spiritual things, wherein he wished them an increased understanding; that he plainly points out the fulness and sufficiency of Christ, without them; and warns the Colossians of their danger of being beguiled with enticing words from the simplicity of the gospel. In leading on, and preparing their minds for a single dependence on Christ alone, the living substance, and for the rejection of all that is not Christ, nor in nor of his life in religion, he tells them it is he, v. 14, "in whom we have redemption:" that he is, v. 15, "the image of the invisible God;" yea, "the first born of every creature." 16, That "by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible." 17, "And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." 18, That "he is the head of the body, the church:" that he is "the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence." And 19, that "it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell." This was a good foundation; for having him actually living in us, in whom all fulness dwells, and he being truly our life, we need no addition of ceremonials. Therefore, the Apostle, drawing on, v. 23, towards the substance, which he wishes them to continue "grounded and settled" in the faith of, not being "moved from the hope of the gospel," he comes, 26, 27, 28, to the very

thing itſelf; "the myſtery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifeſt to his ſaints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this myſtery among the Gentiles;" which he expreſsly ſays (as before noted) "is Chriſt in you, the hope of glory; whom we preach, warning every man," &c.

Observe, reader, we before ſaw that "the word of faith, which the Apoſtles preached," was the "word nigh in the mouth, and in the heart," as Paul plainly teſtifies, Rom. x. 8. And here, in full confirmation of the ſame great truth, the ſame goſpel of ſalvation, we find the ſame Apoſtle declares the Chriſt, the goſpel, yea, the very "riches of the glory of this myſtery," of life and ſalvation, "among the Gentiles," which they the Apoſtles preached, "is Chriſt in you the hope of glory." This is that "hope of the goſpel," which a few verſes before he wiſhed they might not be "moved away from." And to keep them to this, and from ritual obſervances, his labour was fervent among them, "ſtriving according" to the working of Chriſt in him, "which," (ſaith he, v. 29) "worketh in me mightily." And this his fervent labour and ſtriving with them, preaching "Chriſt in them" as the ſubſtantial hope of glory, "warning every man, and teaching every man, in all wiſdom," was expreſsly in order, 28, to "preſent every man perfect in Chriſt Jeſus;" where all perfection in the divine life centres; where God and man are reconciled in the heavenly union; where "he that is joined to the Lord is one ſpirit;" and ſigns are ſuperceded. This was Paul's aim,

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his ſcope and exerciſe in this epiſtle. In the beginning of the next chapter, he manifeſts great care or conflict for them, that "their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full aſſurance of underſtanding, to the acknowledgement of the myſtery," (he had ſpoken of) "of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt; in whom" (ſays he) "are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge." Thus he lays, or propoſes, a ſure foundation, on the all-ſufficiency whereon both he and they might ſafely depend; and that without aid or addition from things which may and muſt be ſhaken, in order that that alone which cannot be ſhaken may remain. For this alone is to remain in the fulneſs of the goſpel ſtate; and ſurely no ceremonials are the things which cannot be ſhaken. That this was Paul's aim, in the foregoing expreſſions, I think we have his own authority to declare; for his next words are, v. 4, "and this I ſay, leſt any man ſhould beguile you with enticing words." And v. 6, he exhorts, "as ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk in him." 7, "Rooted and built up in him, and ſtabliſhed in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thankſgiving." And then comes on pointedly to warn them, and ſhew them the danger of truſting or being drawn away to any thing elſe but the riches, glory and ſufficiency of the great myſtery, wherein was all fulneſs for ſalvation: "beware" (ſays he, v. 8) "leſt any man ſpoil you through philoſophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments (in the margin, elements) of the world, and not after Chriſt." Oh! the miſchief of human philoſophy, carnal reaſonings,

ings, vain deceit, and the wiſdom of this world, in the things of religion. It builds tabernacles for aboliſhed ordinances, and leads thouſands from Chriſt to the rudiments of the world; thereby ſpoiling them as to the increaſe of knowledge and ſtability in Chriſt, who is all-ſufficient for and in his people; as the next words emphatically declare, v. 9, 10, "for in him dwelleth all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." The next verſes ſhew, that neither circumciſion nor outward baptiſm is at all neceſſary; ſo entirely complete we are in Chriſt, the inward and everlaſting fulneſs and divine ſufficiency. Do but read them. "In whom alſo ye are circumciſed, with the circumciſion made without hands, in putting off the body of the ſins of the fleſh, by the circumciſion of Chriſt; buried with him in baptiſm, wherein alſo ye are riſen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raiſed him from the dead. And you being dead in your ſins, and the uncircumciſion of your fleſh, hath he quickened, together with him; having forgiven you all treſpaſſes, blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was againſt us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his croſs." What could Chriſt have done, or Paul have ſaid, more fully to have ſhewn the abolition of ordinances? Even that of water baptiſm is as plainly here expunged and ſuperceded, as circumciſion. And it is marvellous to me, that men of ſenſe, as the author of the forementioned "plain account," &c. with divers others, ſhould be ſo vailed in their underſtandings, as to adduce this paſſage, and ſeveral more of

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ſomewhat a like import, in ſupport of water baptiſm; when the manner of the Apoſtle's bringing it in, juſt after warning them againſt the rudiments of the world, pointing out the fulneſs of Chriſt, the inward hope of glory, and declaring them complete in him, and then immediately ſhewing how they are complete in him, without any of thoſe rudiments he had juſt warned them againſt, ſhews as plainly as ſunſhine, that their circumciſion and their baptiſm were both in him, the one as much as the other. So that I deſire the candid reader to turn to the paſſage, and read for himſelf. And I think he that can find argument in it for water baptiſm, may find as much for circumciſion made with hands. But as the circumciſion here is that made without hands, ſo alſo is the baptiſm. It is all ſpiritual: and, as the Apoſtle words it, conſiſts "in putting off the body of the ſins of the fleſh." Almoſt exactly ſimilar is what he ſays, Rom. vi. 6, ſpeaking expreſsly of this inward and ſpiritual baptiſm "into Chriſt," and "into his death," being "buried with him by baptiſm into death," &c. The words are, "knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him; that the body of ſin might be deſtroyed, that henceforth we ſhould not ſerve ſin." Here the ſame Apoſtle aſcribes the ſame effect to ſpiritual baptiſm into Chriſt, as in the paſſage juſt mentioned, in the epiſtle to the Coloſſians, he aſcribes to circumciſion ſpiritually in him, the "putting off" or "deſtroying the body of the ſins of the fleſh." It muſt be a wrong philoſophy, and vain deceit indeed, that can ſo wreſt theſe plain teſtimonies of the Apoſtle, as to draw elementary water from them for baptiſm.

If circumcision here is inward, so is the baptism. If the baptism is outward, so is the circumcision. They are so joined together, that neither true wisdom, sound reason, nor common sense, can put them asunder, and make the one outward, and the other inward. And if the apostle here excludes outward circumcision, he equally excludes outward baptism. If he retains one, he retains both. But he retains neither. He clearly rejects both; and shews our circumcision and our baptism both complete in Christ, without hands, without a knife, or a single drop of elementary water. He plainly shews the believers not only "buried with him in baptism," but in the same baptism also "risen with him;" and that expressly "through the faith of the operation of God;" which is wholly an internal thing, the very "substance of things hoped for." And having shewn what the one saving baptism and circumcision is, he then with great pertinency exhibits Christ "blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances," taking "it out of the way, nailing it to his cross," as of no further use to such as know him in the fellowship of his sufferings, and in the power of his resurrection; such as experience his fulness, and are circumcised, baptized, and complete in him. For these know his cross, and are crucified by it to the world, and to the rudiments, elements, and ordinances of it; and the world also is crucified unto them. There is no friendship between Christ and belial; nor much between his disciples and the world. His religion does not suit the world. It is too simple, unpopular, unpompous, and too unceremonious; too much a death to self. And I am well satisfied that many,

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who are and have been livingly wrought upon by the power of God, and made to pant for divine ſupport, have yet ſtriven hard to ſave their life in ſelf, in popularity, and in the friendſhip of this world; and from this diſpoſition have ſhunned the croſs; and though they have owned Chriſt, and choſe to be "called by his name, to take away their reproach," they have ſtill preferred to eat their own bread, and wear their own apparel; and, with Nicodemus, to acknowledge and worſhip the bleſſed Jeſus, in the dark ſigns and ſhadows of the night; than openly to embrace the contempt of the croſs, and confeſs him in the inward, unceremonious purity, ſpirituality and ſimplicity of the clear and genuine goſpel day. Dipping under water, and calling that "buried with him by baptiſm into death," the ſpirit of the world, which ſtill too much liveth in them, can more eaſily endure; nay, is ſometimes pleaſed and plumed with it. Far be it from me to think this of all who uſe this ſign. I doubt not, even this is a real croſs to ſome; but I believe it is generally much more tolerable to the ſpirit and wiſdom of the world, than the pure ſimplicity of the goſpel; the real death and burial with Chriſt, in putting off the body of the ſins of the fleſh, and ceaſing from man, and from their own creaturely activity in religion; waiting on God, in abſolute dependence, in nothingneſs of ſelf, and the loſs of all things: this is too hard for the ſpirit of the world. Theſe are hard ſayings to it; who can bear them? Hence many who walk with him awhile in the ſpirit, and run well for a ſeaſon under the croſs, grow weary of the ſufferings and reproaches of Chriſt, turn away back, and walk no more with him; but

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get into the "beggarly elements," and ſit at eaſe in the friendſhip of the world, under a formal profeſſion of religion; very little converſant with the croſs, to which they would know all theſe things nailed, if they rightly abode with Jeſus, and followed him in the regeneration. But as none reign with him, but thoſe who ſuffer with him; as none riſe with him in the likeneſs of his reſurrection, nor walk with him in newneſs of life, but thoſe who are really, not ceremonially planted with him in the likeneſs of his death; as none ſit with him in the throne of his kingdom and glory, but who drink of his cup, and are baprized with his baptiſm; a remnant of true-hearted followers have choſen to ſuffer affliction with him, and follow him, where ever he leadeth, bearing his croſs. Theſe know "the hand-writing of ordinances nailed to it." Their blotting out, and removal, is a thing in familiar experience with them; not merely a matter of record in the letter of the ſcriptures, and thence gleaned up, and ſyſtemized into a lifeleſs creed, confeſſion or profeſſion of faith.

But let us follow the Apoſtle a little further. The next verſe ſhews Chriſt having "ſpoiled principalities and powers," and "openly triumphing over them." Then he enjoins upon the Coloſſians, the way being now quite cleared for it, "let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink" (are not the bread and wine here included, as we have ſeen circumciſion and elementary baptiſm were a few verſes before?) "or in reſpect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the ſabbath day." He goes very thorough in diſmiſſion of ceremonials, and well he might; for his next words are, v. 17, "which are a ſhadow

ſhadow of things to come; but the body is of Chriſt." Therefore he adds, v. 18, &c. "let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility, and worſhipping of angels, intruding into thoſe things, which he hath not ſeen; vainly puffed up by his fleſhly mind. And not holding the head, from which all the body, by joints and bands, having nouriſhment miniſtered and knit together, increaſeth with the increaſe of God. Wherefore, if ye be dead with Chriſt from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye ſubject to ordinances? Touch not, taſte not, handle not; which all are to periſh with the uſing, after the commandments and doctrines of men." He does not ſay, wherefore, if ye be dead and buried with Chriſt, by plunging into the elements or rudiments in water baptiſm; but, quite differently, "wherefore, if ye be dead with Chriſt from the rudiments," or, as the marginal reading has it, "from the elements of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye ſubject to ordinances?" This home query ſhould go to the heart of every obſerver of theſe outward ordinances, and beget a cloſe examination, whether their obſervance thereof, and ſubjection thereto, is not rather following after the traditions "and doctrines of men," in their unſeaſonable and unprofitable continuance in the abrogated inſtitutions and ordinances of former diſpenſations—the rudiments which ought to be left behind, than after Chriſt, who has triumphed over them all, aboliſhed, and nailed them to his croſs? And when this examination is rightly made, and the Apoſtle's prohibitory injunction, "touch not, taſte not, handle not, which all are to periſh with the uſing," &c.

&c. rightly complied with, I believe the "weak and beggarly elements" muſt be rejected; bread, wine and water, as ordinances of religion, renounced, as things "which periſh with the uſing;" and the one only and ſaving baptiſm of the goſpel retained. Here the walking in newneſs of life, and the anſwer of a good conſcience towards God, by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt, will be known. Here the earth will enjoy her ſabbaths again, men reſting from their own works, as God did from his. Here the morning ſtars will ſing together, the ſons of God will ſhout aloud for joy, and the inhabitants of Sion keep holy day to the Lord.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VIII.

*Is a recapitulation or ſummary of a number of the principal reaſons againſt ſuppoſing the Chriſtian commiſſion for baptiſm, Matt.* xxviii. *can mean water.*

THUS having exhibited to the view of the reader many important paſſages of the ſacred records, with many remarks and arguments thereon, which appear to me ſufficient to ſatisfy the minds of ſuch as may, under divine influence and illumination, carefully weigh and conſider them, that the goſpel is an inward, living and ſpiritual diſpenſation, void of any mere outward, figurative and ceremonial inſtitutions, or ordinances; I think proper here, in one view, to recapitulate and preſent the reader with ſeveral of the principal arguments, or reaſons, why the great goſpel commiſſion, Mat. xxviii. Mark xvi. cannot be properly underſtood to enjoin water baptiſm.

I. BECAUSE every religious waſhing in outward water, both under John and Moſes, was ſymbolical of inward purification, and pointed to it, as effected "by the waſhing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt." John's miniſtry, and water baptiſm, in particular, was for Chriſt's manifeſtation to Iſrael. To prepare his way,

way, by turning their minds to ſee the neceſſity, and to a deſire and readineſs for the reception of, and ſubmiſſion to, this his baptiſmal purification; and then expreſsly to decreaſe, as the ſubſtance ſhould increaſe. The type to give place to the antitype; ſeeing ſigns and ſymbols were ever intended to vaniſh out of the way, when the ſubſtance ſignified by them was fully come: they being only as a ſchoolmaſter, to lead unto Chriſt; who is, to every one that believeth in him, the full end of the law of commandments, contained in ordinances; becauſe they are complete in him, without any of thoſe repreſentative obſervances, which only pointed at him, but can have no place in him, nor in his pure goſpel diſpenſation.

II. Because the Greek word *en*, the common word for *in*, might have been uſed in the commiſſion, as on other occaſions, where *in* ſimply was intended, if this baptiſm had been only into water, verbally in the Lord's name. But the word *eis* being here uſed, ſignifying directly *into*, and ſo uſed in many other paſſages, ſhews the baptiſm is into the name, the virtue, life and power of God; into holineſs, meekneſs, purity, gentleneſs, divine wiſdom, true judgment, and whatever communicable grace or virtue a Chriſtian receives by ingraftment into Chriſt, when "cut out of the olive tree, which is wild by nature; and grafted, contrary to nature, into a good olive tree," as Rom. xi. 24. The ingraftment is plainly into Chriſt. The baptiſm is ſeveral times expreſsly declared to be into him. Nor need we doubt but the common word for teach, to wit, *didaſko*, would have been uſed in this

this commiſſion, had it not meant a converting, diſciplining, baptizing kind of teaching, which gathers ſouls into God, their habitation, refuge, and ſtrong tower.

III. Because the Apoſtles were not and could not be qualified to adminiſter this baptiſm, till they were endued with power from on high: could not impart, miniſter or communicate the Holy Ghoſt, but when and as they were baptized or filled with it themſelves. Hence were they commanded to tarry at Jeruſalem, till qualified by the outpouring of the Spirit upon them; and thus to wait for the promiſe of the Father, which they had heard of Chriſt, that "John baptized with water, but they ſhould be baptized with the Holy Ghoſt." And it is very abſurd to ſuppoſe Chriſt, in directing them how and where to wait, and what for, in order to their qualification to adminiſter his baptiſm, would expreſsly point their attention from and beyond that of water, to that of the Holy Ghoſt, had he been then giving them directions about preaching the goſpel, and baptizing in water.

IV. Because in all the after inſtances of baptiſm in water (through condeſcenſion) there is not one, wherein the form of words in this commiſſion is made uſe of; which it muſt have been in every inſtance, where the commiſſion was duly obſerved, had it meant water, and eſtabliſhed a form of words to be uſed in its adminiſtration. And how can we ſuppoſe thoſe, who now uſe water, better know, are more bound by, or more duly obſerve the commiſſion, than the diſciples? The diſciples were ſo far from underſtanding it

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of water, that they never once uſed water, as under it; never once uſed the words of it, as a form in any wiſe proper to an outward or mere figurative performance. And does not this their total omiſſion of thoſe words evince that they were of an high and heavenly import, meaning nothing leſs than a real baptiſm into the divine nature, the very life and ſubſtance of the Godhead, and by no means applicable to the mere outward and viſible ſign of this inward and ſpiritual immerſion, ingraftment and purification? But men now preſume to apply theſe expreſſions to a mere outward ceremony, and dignify immerſion in water, a moſt unſtable element, with the title of a goſpel ordinance; yea, a ſacrament of Chriſt Jeſus.

V. Because when the Holy Ghoſt fell on Cornelius, and his houſhould, through Peter's ſpeaking to them in the life and power of the ſame, he was immediately made to remember (doubtleſs by the great and promiſed remembrancer) the words of Chriſt reſpecting the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt. Thus clearly applying them to the falling of the Holy Ghoſt on thoſe Gentiles, through his miniſtry; that is, through the words ſpoken by him, whereby they ſhould be ſaved, as foretold by the angel. And as only the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt is ſaving; as they did evidently receive this through Peter's miniſtry; as the angel told Cornelius, Peter ſhould tell him words by which they ſhould be ſaved; and as Peter really underſtood the baptiſm they then received (through thoſe words by him ſpoken, and by which they were to be ſaved) to be the one ſaving baptiſm of the goſpel, the very

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ſame promiſed by Chriſt, in the words which were thereupon brought to his remembrance; it is evident the baptiſm of Chriſt is only inward. And more eſpecially, as at this very time, in regard to the baptiſm of water, which was John's, and was for Chriſt's manifeſtation to Iſrael, Peter ſo far doubted the propriety of its adminiſtration to the Gentiles, that he even appealed to the judgment of men about it (which, how would he have dared to have done, had it been his Lord's command) and though none did forbid it, yet he only commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord (the Greek word here is *en*) and not into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt; theſe words in no wiſe ſuiting the nature and deſign of that outward adminiſtration.

VI. Because Peter not only never baptized any in water afterwards, that we have any account of, but expreſsly declares the ſaving baptiſm; both negatively, what it is not, to wit, "putting away the filth of the fleſh," the proper effect of water; and poſitively, what it is, and by what it is effected; it effects, in its complete operation, ſuch a thorough purification, as eſtabliſhes in the ſoul, the anſwer of a good conſcience towards God, and is effected by that which only can do this, the "reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt," the light, and life, and hope of glory in us. And it will for ever be in vain for any to ſuppoſe they have received Chriſtian baptiſm, unleſs they thus know him to be truly and experimentally "the reſurrection and the life" in themſelves; for this alone can produce the true ſanctification and baptiſm of the goſpel. A figure cannot ſave us.

All the washings in water are figures. And one figure is not the sign of another figure. Neither any of the divers Mosaic washings, nor John's immersion (being all but figures) pointed to the baptism of the gospel, as to an outward figurative plunging in water; but as (which in truth it is) to an inward, spiritual washing, in the true laver of regeneration. And I think the old Mosaic typical laver might be as properly continued under the gospel, as sprinkling or dipping in water.

VII. Because Paul, a most eminent Apostle, not a whit behind the chiefest, and who received his commission and his knowledge of Christ by immediate revelation (God revealing his Son in him) and thereby knew his will, and the true spiritual nature of his baptism; speaking of that with water, declares positively, that "Christ sent him not to baptize, but to preach the gospel;" and even thanks God he had baptized no more; which would have been an high presumption, and misdemeanour, had he not known that baptism in water, was no more an ordinance of Christ, than circumcision made with hands. But knowing the circumcision, and baptism of the new covenant, were altogether inward, he says, writing to the Colossians, "ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power; in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ; buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead, chap. ii. 10, 11, 12: thus plainly rejecting both outward

ward circumciſion and baptiſm, the one as much as the other; and ſhewing that the inward, wherein they are complete in Chriſt, is a real putting off the body of ſin, a death unto it, a real burial with Chriſt, and riſing with him; which is ſo far from dipping under and riſing out of the water, that it is only by a faith that is ſo living, and ſo much above all that is outward, and merely of man, that it is truly and powerfully of the very operation of God in the ſoul. Here is that reſurrection of Chriſt, by which the good conſcience is witneſſed in Chriſtian baptiſm. And having thus ſhewn believers' baptiſm to be as entirely inward as their circumciſion, he immediately and very pertinently reminds them of Chriſt's "blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances," and taking "it out of the way, nailing it to his croſs;" cautions them to let no man judge them in reſpect to thoſe outward things, which are but "a ſhadow of things to come," and then roundly queries of them, "wherefore, if ye be dead with Chriſt, from the rudiments or elements of the world, why, as though living in the world, are you ſubject to ordinances?" This ſhews, "dead with Chriſt," or planted in the likeneſs of his death, is not a burial into the rudiments, or elements, as in outward baptiſm, but "dead with Chriſt, from the rudiments;" therefore he immediately enjoins, "touch not, taſte not, handle not, which all are to periſh with the uſing, after the commandments and doctrines of men." By all which we not only perceive his full rejection of all the mere ſhadowy ordinances, but that he was ſo far from eſteeming water baptiſm to be Chriſt's, that he was truly thankful to God that he had never

uſed it, even in condeſcenſion, but in a very few inſtances; and that he conſidered the real baptiſm into Chriſt to include a death with him from all thoſe rudimentary or elementary things which periſh with the uſing; and which, therefore, are not to be touched, taſted, or even handled, as ordinances, nor by any means ſubjected to, by thoſe who are dead to them by baptiſm into death with Chriſt.

VIII. Because all thoſe who truly believe, and in this faith of the operation of God are baptized according to the commiſſion, are thereby ſaved, as promiſed by Chriſt, in giving the commiſſion; which is not true of all who are baptized in water. Simon the ſorcerer both believed and was baptized; and yet, at the ſame time, was ſo far from having any lot, part or portion in goſpel faith or baptiſm, that he was in the very "gall of bitterneſs, and bond of iniquity;" which no doubt has been the caſe with too many beſide Simon: whereas all who are baptized according to the commiſſion, and therein witneſs the floor of the heart thoroughly cleanſed, are baptized into Chriſt, have put him on, the "whole armour of light," and thus being planted in the likeneſs of his death, are alive in the likeneſs of his reſurrection, in true newneſs of life.

IX. Because we have no account, nor the leaſt reaſon to believe, the firſt Apoſtles were ever baptized in water, after John baptized them; for "Jeſus himſelf baptized not." And we have heard of none elſe authorized to baptize them therein, but John; and ſo they being outwardly baptized only into John's baptiſm, if Chriſt's was

alſo

alſo outward, and John's was not it, they never had it. And then they would have been ſent to baptize others with a baptiſm themſelves never received. But they received freely, and were freely to give, and could not give what they never received, nor what they did receive, before they had received it: and therefore were under an abſolute neceſſity to wait till they actually did receive the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt, before they poſſibly could baptize others with it. This they did receive, and this they did adminiſter; and their not preſuming, nor being allowed by their Lord, to attempt baptizing according to the commiſſion, till firſt thus baptized themſelves, ſhews evidently what the baptiſm of the commiſſion was, and that the qualification for its adminiſtration was through the ſame baptiſm firſt received in themſelves, the endument of power from on high. But had the commiſſion intended John's baptiſm, that they were qualified to adminiſter, and did adminiſter before; had it intended water, and yet not as John's, they never receiving it after the commiſſion, any more than before, were no more qualified to adminiſter it afterwards, than before. Hence it reſults, that Chriſt's is that they waited for, received, and then, through the communications of it, adminiſtered to others; that is, the one baptiſm of the goſpel.

X. Because whoever receive Chriſt's baptiſm, are initiated thereby into the church of the firſt-born, the pillar and ground of truth, and have their names written in heaven, have the white ſtone, and new name: and being buried, and riſing with Chriſt, are joint heirs with him; and he is not aſhamed to call them brethren, they in all

all things reverently aſcribing to him the pre-eminence. But this is by no means true of all that are baptized into water. This is in ſubſtance ſomewhat the ſame as the 8th reaſon; but may ſerve to ſhew, that as baptiſm in water is not ſaving, ſo it never initiates any into the church of Chriſt, however it is extolled as an initiatory ordinance.

XI. Because Chriſt himſelf, though he was circumciſed, baptized, &c. outwardly, in order to fulfil, terminate, blot out, and for ever diſannul all ſuch ceremonials, never circumciſed or baptized others outwardly; nor ever ordered any of the multitudes that believed on him, that we have any account of, to receive either. He even waſhed his diſciples' feet, and taught them to waſh one another's; but never baptized them in water, which we may venture to believe he would by no means have omitted, had it been his own baptiſm, the one ſaving and perpetual baptiſm of all true believers.

XII. Because he did baptize them with the holy Spirit, declaring he ſent them even as his Father ſent him; that is, anointed with the Holy Ghoſt, that they ſhould do the works which he did (baptize with the Holy Ghoſt, beſure, was a work which he did.) And as, in order to qualify them, he breathed on them, and bid them receive the Holy Ghoſt, this was truly ſending them as he was ſent, and turning their minds, and fixing their dependence, on the like anointing, for qualification for the like ſervices.

XIII. Because baptiſm in water is certainly one

one of the old things, one of the things that can be ſhaken; and not one that remains, when and where all are ſhaken and removed, that can be ſhaken; not one that can remain, when and where not only the earth, not only ſin, carnality, and earthly mindedneſs, but alſo heaven; things eſteemed heavenly, and which were once really ordinances of God, are thoroughly ſhaken, and all removed, but what cannot be ſhaken; and which alone can remain in this truly goſpel ſtate. The rejoicing of true Chriſtians is in that which God creates, after the old heavens and old earth are ſhaken, and all typical righteouſneſs is paſſed away; that is, in the pure antitypical righteouſneſs which muſt remain, becauſe it cannot be ſhaken, but is of the very nature of, and pertaineth to the new heavens, and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs, in its pure, uncumbered, unceremonious ſimplicity and beauty. The elements (theſe elementary, figurative obſervations) are known, in the truly goſpel ſtate, to melt with fervent goſpel heat; whilſt too many are retaining theſe, and expecting the outward material elements to be melted with outward material fire, at the end of this outward material world. Thus miſſing the marrow and ſubſtance of things, through the outwardneſs of their ideas and expectations.

XIV. Because it is certain, that it does pleaſe God to ſave ſome through the fooliſhneſs of preaching, to wit, ſuch as truly believe. No ſoul can be ſaved, but according to God's mercy "by the waſhing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt." This is Chriſt's baptiſm. And hence it follows, that every ſoul ſaved through

through preaching, muſt thereby be baptized with the Holy Ghoſt and fire, or witneſs the regenerating waſhing, and renewal of the Holy Ghoſt. For this being that without which none can be ſaved, it is idle to think of preaching, ſaving, or contributing towards the ſalvation of any, but through the work of this baptiſm. If preaching at any time contributes more or leſs to ſalvation, it certainly contributes in the ſame degree to this ſpiritual baptiſm. Thus Paul begat ſouls to God through the goſpel. But no miniſtry that is not baptizing, can ever do this. And this is the reaſon why they who run without God's ſending and qualification, do not profit the people. They cannot baptize them into the name by all their arts of rhetoric, and powers of elocution. That is a work ſurpaſſing the utmoſt influence of all ſuch unauthorized miniſtry, and effected inſtrumentally, by no other preaching than that which has its efficacy from the power received from on high. This even the Apoſtles were under an abſolute neceſſity to wait for, and receive too, before they could thus teach baptizing. And the ſame neceſſity of waiting for the ſame qualification will remain, to all Chriſt's true miniſters, to the world's end. Indeed the ſubſtance of the injunction, tarry at Jeruſalem till you are endued, &c. reſts now with equal force on all who are equally obſervant of divine direction, in the work of the goſpel. And to theſe Chriſt's words for ever hold good, "he that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that ſent me." Mat. x. 40. They who truly receive Chriſt, receive his baptiſm. Hence none truly receive his miniſters, and their miniſtry, but

but therein and therethrough they receive him and his baptiſm. This muſt hold good for ever; they who truly receive him, know it. It would be as true, if it had never been ſo expreſſed. Experience would livingly confirm it. But they rejoice that this great truth is ſo clearly, and by ſo many modes of expreſſion, eſtabliſhed in the ſacred records. And their prayers are ſincerely and fervently to God, that ſeeking ſouls may be enabled to ſee, hear and believe it, to the ſalvation of their ſouls, in the ſaving operations of the one only ſoul-ſaving baptiſm of Jeſus.

*FINIS.*

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